

On the Other side

by ADAMalchemist

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Summary: Slowly, he turned to the mirror, seeing a teen stand staring at him with breathtaking blue eyes. He gasped and hiccupped all at once, causing him to look down. This was a dream, right? There was no possible way for a person to be in a mirror. Unless unless this was one of those haunted mirrors his friends back home used to tease him about - I'm horrible at summeries. HiJack fic.

## 1. The mirror in the attic

\*\*A/N: So, I had this crazy idea the other day that maybe, just maybe there is another world on the other side of the mirror. And it got me thinking about things. Somehow, this little piece of...stuff was born from my thinking. I don't own the characters. Enjoy, I guess?\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It <em>is not<em> \_fair\_.

Every child at one point or another says such things. Usually, it's said when being grounded. Being forced to stay in your room, no television, no friends, just you and the set of jacks you have hidden away under your bed for these type of occasions. Sadly, he only wished he was grounded; to stay in his room for forever " in kid years " to do nothing but stare at the four walls he had grown up with. At the moment, he was anything \_but \_grounded. The clouds were only a foot or two away from the window he sat next to.

Hendrick crossed his arms and puffed his cheeks in frustration. This was completely unfair, having to move. What was wrong with his old house? The country he lived in ever since he was born? There was no war, no real reason he saw to move. His father could've easily found a job back home. Why would he want to get one so far away?

He picked up his small legs, leaning them up against the seat in front of him as he slid down his own seat, almost trying to hide from

the world. His father, who sat next to him, frowned and patted the top of the ten year old's flip flops. With a long sigh, he did as his father silently commanded and dropped his feet.

The flight from Iceland to America was longer than expected. Hendrick expected it to be no longer than an hour or two, depending on the weather of course. But, the weather was fine; seemingly clear skies, the sun just perfectly coming into sight. He yawned and glared out the window. They should have been in Burgess by now, unpacking what little stuff they brought with them. Which was only a few sets of clothes, family heirlooms, a toy or two, and all important photographs. Sadly, no matter how hard he tried, no matter how hard he begged, he was unable to stuff his friends into his suitcases. If one were to ask Hendrick's mother about the situation, she would laugh and go on about how he laid his best friend in the small case, jumping on the top while he tried to zip up the last few inches.

Slowly, he started to fall asleep, leaning his head against the window. The vibrations from the plane's engines seemed to lull him even deeper into the neutral darkness until he was finally asleep. His mother continuously turned and smiled every five minutes, taking a picture here and there. After all, her son was the cutest thing when he slept; face as soft as cotton, his mouth open just a tiny bit. It wasn't but two hours later that his face changed from bliss to fear. This being his first time in an airplane, the landing completely terrified him. He could feel as they slowly lowered closer to the ground, each and every mile between the grass and the clouds shot his heart. With tiny hands, he gripped the armrests hard, his knuckles turning white. His eyes darted from the window to every other passenger on board. How did they manage to keep this calm?

Hendrick practically pulled his father back down when they had finally landed and everyone began leaving the plane. He held onto the strong arm for dear life, his knees shaking as he left with his parents.

The sun beat on his face and arms harshly. Summer in Iceland was never this warm. Warm, but never like this. Even though he was wearing shorts, a thin t-shirt, and flip flops, it still was too hot. He rubbed his arm across his forehead. Sweat had already begun to bead on every part of his body and he had hardly taken five steps onto American soil. Holding his father's hand as tightly as he could, he followed his parents into his uncle's car.

His Uncle Griffith "or Gobber as Hendrick had come to know him" lived happily in Burgess with a missing leg, arm, and slightly lazy eye. It bothered the child at times to look at it, forcing him to look at people's lips whenever he talked with anyone. His father would push his head a bit and tell him to look people in the eye.

"It's polite." He would say to his son. But, a habit was a habit and his father ended up giving him the same lecture every time the two talked. Which wasn't very often to begin with.

Griffith smiled as he drove, telling the three what he could about the city. He looked into the mirror and stared at Hendrick's reflection. "There are some kids down the road from your house." He

said, trying to cheer the poor kid up. "About your age."

Val, Hendrick's mother, smiled and tapped her son's bare knee. "You hear that?"

Hendrick looked up at her and blinked, clearly not hearing his Uncle. She smiled and continued. "Kids your age not too far from the house."

The news didn't seem to make him any happier. In fact, it caused his depressing gaze to move from the window to his feet. The action made his mother frown. "Hendrick, I know this is hard for you."

"You \_don't\_ know, mom." The child played with the hem of his shirt, twisting it around his fingers and rubbing the base of his nails against the stitching. "Nobody will want to be my friend." His accent was still thick and made many of the words sound odd.

Val rubbed her child's back, sending him a small " rather forced " smile. "I'm sure somebody will want to be your friend. It's a new land, full of wonders."

"America is not mystical, mom. There's nothing special about it."

Steinn looked over at his mopping son, shaking his head. He was silent when it came to such things as soothing the boy. His wife was much better suited for the job as he would just seem to make it worse. Even when Hendrick was only a few months old, it was hard for him to rock the baby to sleep. After years of wondering, he figured it must have been his hulking size scaring the poor thing.

Griffith's smile became smaller as he pulled up into the drive way. "Well," He sighed and turned to look at the three. "here we are. Home sweet home."

"Thank you, Gobber." Val said happily.

Hendrick did not hesitate climbing out of the car and looking up at the three story building. It was rather old, the white paint chipping off the wonderful designs that were carved into the centuries old wood. The front door shined in his face and gracefully showed off it's stained glass. Twisting the brass knob, he gawked at the rugged stairs and beautifully crafted ceilings. This wasn't a house; it was a masterpiece. If anything, this house should be shown to the public.

He ignored the three adults talking as they walked in, heading straight into what he could only guess was the living room. The fire place was perfectly sculpted from marble and was what every child sees in Christmas time cartoons. Underneath him, the floorboards creaked. Great. There goes every chance of \_ever\_ sneaking down to watch television at night. He sighed and rolled his eyes, walking into the next room. It was small but long, containing a table for at least sixteen people. He could already imagine it now; all those empty seats and spaces between each other.

The kitchen itself wasn't all too grand. It was simple; white walls, new appliances, the sort of kitchen he had back home. With a slightly

heavier heart, he walked up the stairs as quietly as he could. His parents and Uncle laughed as they sat down in the dining room, not noticing the child move to the bedrooms.

Each one held a fireplace, a wardrobe, and an overly extravagant bed. He raised an eyebrow as he walked into one room, looking all around. It wasn't small, but not big enough to seem bare. The velvet curtains felt soft under his touch and it actually made him smile.

\_Tha-thump!\_

Hendrick jumped at the sound the ceiling made. Ceilings don't usually make noises and it completely caught him off guard. He stared up at the spot he heard the noise, waiting, almost daring for it to scare him again. Sure enoughâ€¦

\_Tha-thump!\_

He tilted his head to the side and walked out. There were four more doors in front and beside him, only two had been opened. With shaking knees, he made his way around the fenced hole the staircase made and stood in front of a small, narrow door. It was plain, nothing too exciting. So, why did it make his heart rush and beat as fast as it was? His hand shook with anxiety as he grabbed the knob. Taking a deep breath, he pulled it open as fast as humanly possible. A bathroom. There was no way anyone could feel as foolish as he felt in that moment.

\_Tha-thump!\_

His eyes traveled to the door beside him. It was the same as the others; big, dark oak with carvings all around it. "This is crazyâ€¦" he mumbled to himself and rolled his eyes. "Maybe just a cat."

The house was old, after all, and maybe nobody has been here for years. The grime on the windows sure showed the neglect. He sighed and walked over, opening it with sarcastic movements. The sound stopped and left him in silence. He couldn't even hear the adults downstairs if they were still in the house at all. It made him shake a little and he stared to back away. In front of him was a set of stairs leading up into the attic. They looked even older than the house, dust caked on every step. He looked all around for the signs of a cat but saw none.

"H-hello?" He stuttered. "Thumping noise?"

The feeling of a hand on his shoulder made him scream. Val jumped and looked over her child, repeating the same questions over and over. "What's the matter? What happened?"

Hendrick shook his head and held onto his mother. "I-I heard a noise!"

"What's going on up there?!" His father called from downstairs.

"Oh, Hendrick just got a little scared! I jumped him by accident!"

The ten year old frowned and watched as his mother closed the attic

door. "Let's not play around upstairs." She said, smiling down at him. "Now, come on. Uncle Gobber is taking us out to dinner."

\* \* \*

><p>American food tastedâ€|different. There was a sort of sweetness and saltiness to it unlike the food back in Iceland. He took a sip of his water and nibbled on the end of a chicken strip, his legs swinging ever so slightly.<p>

The atmosphere was different as well. Even though the lights were dull, the place seemed to jump with excitement. Popular music played and words scrolled at the bottom of a television that was hanging next to the bar. Most of the waitresses were nice, peppy, and polite while others were not so much; rolling their eyes as often as they could.

Every time a child passed their table or was seated not too far away, Val would tap Hendrick on the shoulder and smile, pointing over at the possible friend. He, in turn, would shake his head and return back to his dinner. It wasn't until dessert that she finally said something as she pointed.

"How about that girl right there?" She asked, smiling as she rubbed her son's shoulder. "Why don't you go talk to her?"

Hendrick rolled his eyes. "Mom, really? I don't want to go over there. If she wants to be friends, she can come to me."

Val pouted. "But sweetieâ€|please? Do this for me at least."

He looked up at her with fierce eyes, trying his hardest to stand his ground. He was not going to go over there. He was not going to talk to that girl. And he was notâ€|going to say no to his mother. He did sigh and get up. He did walk over to the blonde girl about his age four tables away. And he did stumble over his words before an acceptable greeting flew out of his mouth. His accent seemed thicker than normal, causing him to blush and rub his arm when the girl asked him to repeat what he had said. They talked for a moment, just simple things really; each other's names, each other's ages, what school they were going to in the fall. But, he still seemed overly nervous. He backed away and waved his goodbye, bumping into one of the crankiest waitresses he ever did see.

"Watch where you're going, kid." She hissed, picking up the cups she had dropped. "Now I gotta go bring these back. As if today wasn't bad enough."

Hendrick looked down and tried to sink into himself, wishing some vortex would swallow him up. He quickly sat back down and shoveled the chocolate ice cream into his mouth. Steinn rubbed the side of his head and looked over at Griffith.

"Are you almost done?" He asked, looking down at his best friend's half eaten banana split.

The man nodded and dabbed the remains of whipped cream off his mustache. "I am. Once the waitress comes back, we'll pay and leave."

Thank the Gods. Hendrick didn't know how much more he could take. People at other tables laughed and chuckled, making him think they were talking about him. Some even pointed his way. Finally, their waitress came by with the check and a mop. She waited for them to pay " mostly waiting for the tip, no doubt " and began walking away. The boy looked up at her and mumbled an apology before leaving, hiding behind his mother's arm. Of course, Val patted his head and climbed into the backseat with him.

The ride from the restaurant to their new home didn't seem long to the adults. Possibly ten, twenty minutes tops. But, to any child, it was long enough for them to fall asleep and slip away into a fantastic dream. Where nothing embarrassing happened and everything was the way it should be.

"Looks like everything tuckered the little guy out." Griffith said as he pulled into the driveway, looking over at Hendrick through the mirror. "Poor little man."

Val smiled and unbuckled both herself and her son, gently picking him up. "Haven't held him like this since he was a baby." She whispered to her husband.

He nodded. "Thanks, Gobber. We really had a fun time." Steinn whispered before closing the car doors.

"Anytime! I'll come by tomorrow to help you with getting furniture."

The family waited and waved as he pulled out, driving off into the night. She looked down at Hendrick, holding him close to her body as she walked inside and up the stairs. The poor boy looked absolutely adorable curled up in his mother's arms. His tiny hands clutched swatches of her shirt as she laid him down, his father taking his flip flops off.

"Do you think he'll like it here?" He asked in a whisper, looking up at his wife. "He looked angry when we got on the plane."

Val shrugged and pulled the covers up over Hendrick's chin. "It will take time, Stoick." She said, using her nickname for him. "Everything will work itself out in time. It may take a week. Maybe even a month. But, he'll love living here sooner or later. Just you watch." She turned to him with a smile and held his hand, leading him out of their child's room.

Everything was silent after that. Even the boy's breathing and the wind outside could not be heard. His chest fell and rose at a slow pace, showing just how deep in sleep he truly was. Nothing could wake him up. Not the tapping of a tree branch against his window at midnight. Not the creak of the floorboards as the house readjusted itself at two in the morning. It seemed he could sleep forever without a care in the world. That is, until his throat began to tingle and his stomach began to curl.

He blinked his eyes open and looked around the room. For a moment, he had forgotten where he was. He began wondering what happened to his small bed, his toy chest, and his various dragon drawings. The panic attack slowly left him as he remembered the terrifying airplane trip and the embarrassing introduction at the restaurant. His cheeks

flushed red as he slipped out of his bed, making his way to the bathroom first. It was small with a checkered tiled floor. The mirror seemed to be part of the wall, it's frame painted all around. It made him smile slightly after his business was done. Even if the colors were faded, it was still very pretty.

Hendrick yawned as he walked down the stairs. It was a surprise his parents didn't wake up from the constant creaking from each step he took. He let his hand skim the wall as he walked in, taking in the small details he couldn't see through the darkness. As soon as the doorway to the kitchen passed his fingertips, the carvings stopped and everything was smooth. His arm dropped to his side until he needed it again to open the cupboard and pull out a glass. He twisted the cold knob on the sink, yawning once again as he started filling his cup.

\_Tha-thump!\_

The ten year old jumped at the sudden sound, nearly throwing the glass cup across the room. He stared up at the ceiling as he thought of possible ways the sound could have been made. The house was old, so it might have just been the pipes from the water. His parents could have heard him and maybe just woke up. Perhaps something fell down in the attic.

\_Tha-thmp!\_

Adrenaline pumped through his veins as he just stood there, listening for the thumping again. He took a sip of water, placed the glass down, and played with the hem of his shirt. "H-hello? Mom, dad?" He called, coming out into the hallway.

There was no answer. Everything was silent save for the water flowing from the tap in the kitchen. He held his breath, waiting, listening for the sound. Slowly, he started climbing up the stairs, not even bothering to stay quiet as he did so.

\_Tha-thump!\_

He gasped, his head going back as he felt the familiar tug and snap inside his throat. Really? Was now really the best time to get the hiccups? Hendrick sighed and rolled his eyes, opening the attic door.

"Hel-lo?" He called out, hiccupping halfway through. "Is any-one up here?" His head snapped back slightly, earning a groan as he walked up the filthy stairs.

There was no sound of a breeze blowing through a cracked window or a cat running around the floor. There was just the subtle of deaf flowing. As if he was underwater, his ears completely exposed to the liquid. He rubbed both ears for a moment before continuing up the cheap, old steps.

He had expected to see boxes everywhere. Maybe a desk in the corner, perhaps a chair or two. Something almost everyone has in either their attic or basement. But, as he finally reached the top of the stairs, there was none of that. No boxes or desks, not a chair to be seen. The only thing in the dusty, old, moonlit attic was a body length mirror; it's glass clouded from the fading silver.

It stood there, not making a single sound. The more he walked up to it, though, the deeper his heart sank. His reflection was no where to be seen. Hiccupping, he looked behind.

"Hello?" The voice sent a chill up Hendrick's spine and caused him to scream.

"Whose there?!" He fell to the floor, looking down the stairs.

"Hey, this is my house. I should be asking who you are." The voice sounded muffled and it waved as if it came from underwater.

Slowly, he turned to the mirror, seeing a teen stand staring at him with breathtaking blue eyes. He gasped and hiccupped all at once, causing him to look down. This was a dream, right? There was no possible way for a person to be in a mirror. Unless unless this was one of those haunted mirrors his friends back home used to tease him about.

He looked back up at the strange seeing glass expecting to see his own, nervous reflection. Instead, he saw the same teen; his leather cape coat and white hair waving as if he was hit by a breeze Hendrick could not feel. His lips were blue and his skin overly pale. The child hiccupped as he stood up, trying to swallow back the bodily function.

The teen smiled and gave out a chuckle. "Well, Hiccups, what are you doing here?"

Frowning at the nickname, he glared at the mirror. "My name isn't Hiccup, it's Hendrick. And what are you doing in the mirror?" He reached over and touched the glass. Ice cold.

He shrugged. "I don't know!" Placing a hand on his side of the mirror, he looked straight into the child's eyes. "I don't remember how I got in here. All I know is, I can't get out."

Hendrick stared up at him and tilted his head. This teenager whom had scared him looked frightened as he rubbed his hand against the glass. Only the Gods knew how long he had been trapped. And if he was alone the whole time, it could have seemed longer than his actual sentence.

"Who are you?" He asked, taking a step closer.

The other smiled, his eyes twinkling like snow against the sun. "My name's Jack. And if I could, I'd shake your hand." Jack chuckled.

The brunet nervously tried his best to laugh back but saw that Jack wasn't buying it. He rubbed his arm and looked down at his bare feet, embarrassed as he hiccupped once more. Not as bad as earlier, but embarrassed nonetheless.

"So, Hiccup."

"Hen-drick."

"Hiccup. What are you doing up here? It's way past your bedtime,



isn't it, kiddo?"

He pressed his lips together in fury. Kiddo? No way. He was ten years old. Soon to be eleven in October. He was a preteen and should be treated as such. His hands balled into fists and he crossed his arms over his chest. "I'll have you know," He started, very matter-of-factly. "that I am ten years old."

Jack tried his hardest to suppress his laugh. Oh, this was just too much! "Ten years old, huh?" He kneeled down to look into the other's green eyes. "Well, if you were ten, then you should know you shouldn't be wondering a creepy house at night."

"Yeah, it's creepy. But, I live here now. So I have to get used to it sooner or later. And I choose sooner because I don't know when I'll get to go back to my old home. It could be years. I don't want to wait years to get used to the creepy thumps; I'll get gray hair like you!"

"It's not gray, it's silver." He rolled his eyes. Man, this kid could talk something fierce. If he hadn't interrupted, the little guy could have gone off on a tangent.

Hendrick raised an eyebrow and shook his head. "Were you those thumps?" He asked, yawning a little.

"Well, yeah. I heard voices and decided to make some noise." He stretched out his hands, seeming to grab something on either side of him. Then, with tongue slithering out between pure white teeth, the mirror began to move back and forth.

Tha-thump! Tha-thump! Tha-thump!\_

"Okay, that's enough!" The child whispered. "You'll wake my parents and I'll get in trouble!"

Jack smiled, pulling his hands away and up to his chest. He stared down at the boy and noticed the bags under his eyes, sleep goop forming on his lashes. By the looks of it, he was ready to go back to bed. But, all he did was cross his arms back over his chest and give a sort of glare back up at him. It had been years, no, centuries since he had last seen a human being. The sight of Hiccup relaxing made him flutter with excitement and he sighed.

"Hey, you alright?" Hendrick asked. "Are you tired?"

He shook his head. "No, I'm not. But you are. Get back to bed."

"But-"

"No buts, Hiccup. Get to bed."

"Are yo-"

The mirror started rocking back and forth again, a clear sign that he should high tail it out of the attic. He took the sign and ran down the stairs, accidentally slamming the door shut with such force, a picture shook as it hung off the wall.

Val very sleepily opened her bedroom door and stared at her son. "Hendrick?" She whispered. "What in the world were you doing upstairs? Didn't I tell you not to go up there yet?"

He stared at her. "I'm sorry, mom. I won't go up there again without asking."

She nodded and looked down at the staircase, looking like she was thinking something over. Finally, she looked over at him, watching as he tip-toed over to his bedroom. "What were you doing up there?"

Hendrick blinked and looked up at her. "Nothing."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: It doesn't seem that long on here, but, on my word document, it's about ten pages. Which is a lot considering I usually write about five or six. Should I continue or what? - ADAM  
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\*\*Review = Motivation = Chapters \*\*

## 2. The most over done birthday party ever

\*\*A/N: I honestly don't know what to say. Well, um, I didn't know people would actually like it. Also, this is like 10 - 11 pages long on Microsoft Document. And I have many other fics. But, I'm not going to fail this one. It will be finished, I swear it. I'm not going to leave you hanging off that cliff. And now, enjoy a new chapter. \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It's honestly amazing how much you can get away with at such a young age; taking cookies off hot plates behind mother's back, staying up past bedtime to watch television. But even more so, sneaking around the house for hours on end <em>without <em>making a sound.

Which was something Hendrick did very often.

He would pace from his bedroom to the bathroom, listening for his mother and father's snoring. Which sounded very much like an unconscious dual between the two if you listened long enough. First, Steinn would snore loud enough to be heard from down the hall. Then, Val would start up, able to be heard from all the way down stairs. It took an hour or two, but, when Hendrick would come back from the attic, he could have sworn he saw the master bedroom door move as if it was breathing. And Jack had seen it as well.

Even though his parents were semi-light sleepers, Hendrick always seemed to move the mirror downstairs without waking them up. And the mirror was heavy for a ten year old. Solid mahogany framing with much detail, more than four pounds of well silvered glass; this thing weighed tons. But it was worth going up and down two flights of stairs to get to watch cartoons with his only friend at the time. School, after all, was horrible and nobody wanted anything to do with him. Unless they wanted lunch money. Then everyone was 'best friends'. Each large, dimwitted preteen in the entire building would

take turns every week to show Hendrick a different part of the school. First it was the boy's bathroom on the third floor which, did indeed, lack in some actual toilets and stall doors. The next was the girl's locker room and showers on the first floor right across from the gym. The list went on and on but one thing was the same: he always lost his lunch money.

At first, Jack was a little frightened by the television. He had seen many things in his lifetime; radios, lava lamps, walkmans but, he had never seen a television before. His eyes were wide with excitement every time he was set in front of the screen and would constantly ask Hendrick to change the channel so he could watch the news. The things that were happening elsewhere in the world fascinated him and scared him at the same time. Some nights, he would ask the brunet to place the mirror in the child's bedroom just so he could make sure nobody hurt him while he was asleep.

September seemed to go by fast with the two keeping each other company. Before they knew it, it was already October. Halloween decorations littered hallways, windows, rooms, and even the stairs. Val had hung up a sign that, when moved, would blink 'turn back' while screaming practically in your face. Whenever Hendrick opened the front door, it would almost give him a heart attack.

And as the Halloween decorations went up, so did the birthday party supplies.

"How many people do you want at your party, Hendrick?" Val asked while she made the boy's favorite treat; apple crisp.

The ten year old shrugged. '\_No one, because nobody likes me\_.' He thought to himself before looking up at his mother. "I don't know yet."

"Well, what about that nice boy, Steven, that's at your bus stop? Or those sweetheart twins, Rachel and Trevor?"

His mother waited with him by the bus stop every morning and saw only what the others wanted her to see. Which were smiles and laughs and 'you look very nice in that today, Mrs. Haddock, did you get a haircut?'. But, once the bus pulled away and Val was half way down the street, those masks came off faster than Hot Pockets got warm.

Steven was an ugly brute of a boy, with a nose that stuck up so high, Hendrick thought he was a pig at first sight. His voice also had begun to crack and the beginnings of a mustache formed on his top lip. It didn't help that he was thirteen and puberty had struck him at the same time his parents decided he needed to be held back two years.

Rachel and Trevor weren't as bad as Steven, but, they always had nasty, mischievous grins that made Hendrick wonder what they were thinking. Most of the time, their thoughts were stuck on pranks. In hindsight, they were harmless. Only meant for laughs and fun. But at the time, the child was the only one silent. It hurt to hear the others laughing at him.

It was not a good idea to invite either of the three. And as the brunet opened his mouth to tell his mother no, don't do it, I beg

you, she had already wrote their names on the guest list.

"Oh, who else should I invite? Yes! That little girl from the restaurant! I saw her walking her dog not too far away the other week. She goes to a privet school, you know, but, we talked for a few minutes on my way to the supermarket."

There was only two real people Hendrick wouldn't mind having at his birthday party. Jack, who, would creep the children out and Louis, another boy from his bus stop. He wouldn't say much. The two would glance at each other and say normal comments like how they like each other's shirts or they would ask the other if they saw that new documentary on dragons. "How about Louis?" He asked when he looked up at his mother.

"Louis?" She looked up at the ceiling and tried to put a face to the name. "Ah, that fat boy with the squint and beanie?"

Hendrick smiled and nodded his head. Maybe his birthday wouldn't be that bad after all. Although, handing out the invitations seemed to be horrible all in itself.

Val put a small stack of orange envelopes in Hendrick's backpack one October morning and sent him off to school with the biggest smile on her face. She could just picture it now; Hendrick smiling with many friends patting him on the back, playing with him and his new toys. It would make him like America better, she thought. Sadly, that wasn't the case.

Each envelope was addressed to each student in his homeroom class except for Louis' since he was in a classroom across the hall. Steven was the first to get his and he didn't seem all too happy about it. In fact, he laughed in the younger child's face, crumpled up the invitation, and threw it at his forehead. Rachel and Trevor got their invitation after a few more classmates. They stared at the orange paper and began whispering with odd chuckling that sounded more like snorting than anything else. It could only mean bad things the way they were glancing up at him then back down at the invite. Hendrick immediately started walking away without another word.

Some of the other students just smiled when he handed them out and quickly shoved them into their desks, never to be seen again. Most of them said that they had to ask their parents and that they likely had a dentist or doctor's appointment that day.

When Hendrick gave Louis his invitation at the end of the day, he was slightly shocked. The boy nodded with a smile. "Yeah, I'll be there. Hendreck, right?"

"Actually, it's Hendri-" He stopped himself. His name sounded so odd in an American accent. It sounded just about as foreign as he was. "Hiccup. It's Hiccup." He said at last, using Jack's nickname for him.

Louis lifted an eyebrow as he stared at him. "Hiccup? I thought it was Hendreck."

Hendrick shook his head. "I like to be called Hiccup." He took a better look at his soon-to-be friend.

His arms were enormous, his stomach gargantuan. Then he looked down at Louis' legs. They were as thin as toothpicks. No bigger " or smaller " than his own. His eyes went wide and he began to wonder just how those tiny things held up that much weight. They looked like " "Fish legs." He whispered to himself.

"Excuse me?" Louis almost looked offended.

"Uh, uh, well, um, y-you're legs. They're just about as small as mine and I-I'm such a fishbone s-so, uh "oh geeze, I'm sorry."

His heart completely stopped when he heard the large boy laugh. It surprised him more than anything else would. Hendrick raised an eyebrow as he stared at the child. "You're not "upset?"

"What? No! I get called worse names all the time!" The blonde placed his hands on his hips. "Besides, it sounds more like me than 'Louis'. And you look more like a Hiccup than a Hendreek."

"It's Hen\_drick\_ "and thanks."

The bus ride home wasn't as bad as usual that day. Maybe one or two paper airplanes or spitballs hit him upside the head, but he didn't notice. He was far too busy talking with Louis " who preferred the name Fishlegs " about things other children would call 'geeky'. They talked the whole ride about English shows with flying, space police boxes and fire breathing dragons that cut off the tops of fully grown trees. It was, actually, a surprise that nobody started whispering about them, passing false rumors.

Sadly, his parents didn't think it as great as he did. As soon as he mentioned Fishlegs, they looked at each other with strange looks. Their faces twisted in such ways that, Hendrick thought they were communicating through their minds. When they finally spoke, they told their son that it was nice he made a new friend, just be careful, and to try and make other friends. He knew they didn't care much for Fishlegs. The boy has been caught, every once in a while, with a small dragon toy or his hamster in his jacket pocket. After dinner, Hendrick went up to his room, waited for his parents to fall asleep, and then crept up into the attic where Jack sat waiting.

"Hey, you." He said with a smile. "How was school?"

The brunet shrugged. "It was alright. I made a new friend." He sat in front of the mirror in his familiar spot; which was now decorated with pillows and blankets and a small space heater. "How was the attic?"

Jack shrugged as well. "I saw a spider walk across the floor today. After I had tea with the Queen, of course."

"Tea with the Queen?" Hendrick smiled. "But you can't drink or eat, can you?" He looked his friend over.

His hair was still white and waving and bubbles came out of his mouth as he talked. They were normal and gave him the illusion that they were underwater like mermaids. But something was off about him. Was it just him or were the bags under his eyes getting darker?

The teen shook his head with a laugh. "No. I can't eat. Or drink." He

put his hand up against the glass separating them. "All I can do is sit here, I guess."

Hendrick's smile turned into a frown. There were, indeed, times where he wondered what Jack was up to but, most of the time, he didn't. It was almost like having a pet but not at the same time. Jack was by no means a 'pet', of course. He was Hendrick's best friend. They told each other everything. But, when he was at school, he never really thought about him till the last few minutes. It made him feel guilty and horrible like he had forgotten something important. And now that he knew that all Jack did was sit around and wait for him to come home; it made him feel even worse.

His stomach churned and flopped and almost got stuck in his throat a few times before he could finally look back up at Jack. The other was looking around the room, taking in the few things that were up there. When he felt the boy's green eyes on him, he looked down and smiled.

"So, this new friendâ€¦what're they like?"

The two spent a good hour talking about Fishlegs. And then another three hours just talking and playing simple games like twenty questions or checkers. It wasn't until Hendrick started yawning that Jack finally stopped playing.

"Alright, Hiccup." He said, rubbing away the many games of tick-tack-toe that they had played on the mirror's surface. "Time for you to go to bed."

Hendrick yawned again and rubbed his eye, leaning back on one of the many pillows with a blanket up to his chin. "Noâ€¦I'll sleep hereâ€¦"

Jack chuckled and shook his head. "No, you gotta go downstairs, Hiccup. Do you want your mom or dad to find you up here? You'll get in trouble."

"I don't wanna leave you aloneâ€¦"

Five families have lived in the house before Hendrick's. All had children either around, older, or younger than him. The older children, who were around their teens, didn't really talk to Jack all that much. They acknowledged that he was there, but never really took the time to become real friends with him. The younger children loved him just as much as Hendrick did. All the same things happened to an extent; they snuck upstairs, made pillow forts with him. One even showed him the magic of a lava lamp. But, when they grew up, they never came back. Hearing Hendrick say something Jack knew was inevitable hurt. And it made him smile at the same time.

He reached his arm forward to cover the boy up even more but the mirror's glass stopped him with an echoing tap. His smile turned into a frown and he placed his hand in his lap. "But you will."

The sound of the attic door opening caught his attention and he quickly hid out of sight. He listened to his friend's mother whisper to the sleeping child, telling him how foolish he was to sleep in such a cold attic even with a secret space heater. There was complete silence for a moment until he heard Val tap on the mirror's glass

with her finger. Ripples seemed to echo throughout the room on his side, making him wide eyed. He knew that normal mirrors never did this. And that normal mirrors usually give off the reflection of the one staring into it. But, all she did was mumble to herself and walk back downstairs, closing the door behind her.

\* \* \*

><p>When your birthday is in the month of October, many think you're going to have a Halloween themed party. With pin-the-arm-on-the-mummy, bobbing for apples, and(if you're rich enough) a corn stock maze. Sadly, that's exactly what his mother had planned. Even if Hendrick just wanted a normal party with rainbow balloons and colorful paper plates like the rest of the kids had.<p>

He never really had a normal party like that. It was always the same sort of party; orange and black and wear whatever Halloween costume you want and jack-o-lantern piñatas. Every once in a while it'd be nice to have such a festive get together but, it'd also be nice to just have a birthday party and not a huge, Halloween extravaganza.

Hendrick sat in his room staring into his closet mirror. He looked himself over; looking at the black scales his mother had painted on his face, the green catlike contacts in his eyes, the onyx wings on his back. Even though most of the costume was made of 100% cotton, he truly looked like a little dragon of the night. He pressed the button on the inside of his sleeve to make his wings flap slightly. With a smile, he hopped all the way up into the attic and tapped on Jack's mirror. Before any of his guests came, he wanted his best friend to see.

"Jack! Jack!" He said happily, looking all around the other side of the mirror.

In a sort of floating, swimming way, the teen walked over to the mirror's glass and smiled back at the child. "Well, look at you! Hiccup the dragon. I like it. How did you get your eyes to do that?"

Hendrick laughed. "They're contacts, Jack. I didn't do this." He opened his eyes wide with his fingers, moving closer so that his friend could see. "They're little things that you put in your eyes and make them look different. I could get some that make my eyes yellow or red or blue."

"Nah, those wouldn't look cool on you." Jack shook his head and crossed his arms. "Green is more your color. Besides, with red or yellow or blue eyes, you'd look like a freak."

The birthday boy raised an eyebrow and dropped his arms. "But, you have blue eyes."

The white haired young man opened his mouth to say something until the sound of the front door bell rang and echoed throughout the house. Val's voice mixed itself with another woman's, both greeting each other in the most friendliest way possible. He began to wonder who this new person was until he heard the brunet's mother call him downstairs.

"Hendrick!" Val called. "Steven is here!"

Hendrick rolled his eyes and groaned. "I guess I'll be back later." He said and started walking toward the attic door, his head hung low.

"Alright, Hiccup. Have fun."

'\_If only I could. But this is going to be the \_worst \_day of my life.\_' He thought to himself as many other things came to mind. Such as Steven keeping Hendrick's head under the water as he bobbed for apples or purposely making him run into the wall during pin-the-arm-on-the-mummy. With all the activities his mother had planned, Steven was sure to embarrass him one way or another.

He sighed and walked down to the foyer where, unfortunately, Steven stood wearing a Viking costume. Which, was slightly fitting. He was a brute of a boy, his arms much bigger than Hendrick's head. It was only right to make him look even bigger with furs and armor.

"Hello, Hendrick." He said, trying to sound like the sweetheart Val made him out to be.

"Helloâ€¦Stevenâ€¦" The newly appointed eleven year old rubbed his arm and looked down at his feet.

Both boys walked around the house, Hendrick giving a sort of tour. He made the smartest choices in not letting him into the attic or either of the bedrooms, saying that they had a nasty case of bedbugs and were trying to smoke them out during the party. When his mother asked them to help with setting up the games, he knew this wasn't going to be good. And, in fact, it wasn't. Steven poured water all over Hendrick, stuck the arm of the mummy to his shoulder, and even tripped him over as they set up the candy bowls, making him fall flat on his face, candy all over him. By the time Rachel and Trevor got there, he was a complete mess and was begging to take a bath.

A few more kids from his class came. Kids he really didn't know well and frankly didn't get along with made themselves at home very easily. Some even dared others to try and go into the attic which was said to be the most haunted place in the whole house. But, Val didn't have it. She kept a constant eye on her child's favorite room's door. A couple children managed to make it up the stairs, but they didn't stay for long.

Thankfully, Fishlegs made it an hour before the cake was meant to be presented. He had dressed himself up as a lobster and chuckled when he saw his new friend. "Hiccup, what happened to you? You look like crap."

"Thank you, Fishlegs. You look lovely yourself." Hendrick said with the most sarcastic voice.

His blond friend blushed and smiled nervously, patting him on the shoulder. "Oh, b-but your costume looks cool. If you didn't start bobbing for apples and make your cool scales run, then you would have looked more awesome than you do now."

"I didn't bob for apples. Steven poured water on me." He closed the



door and looked into the living room where everyone ran around laughing.

"Snotface?" Fishlegs asked. "Oh, don't let him get to you. You'll go insane if you do."

Hendrick couldn't help but chuckle at the nick name his friend had given to their bully. "Snotface? Why Snotface?"

"When he was younger, his nose never stopped running. It always had either blood or snot coming out of it. So, to get him back, we call him Snotface."

He was liking his new friend now. Never did he ever think about getting back at a bully. He always thought that it'd just make the situation worse. Now he knows, getting back at the one getting you this way is funny. And even makes the stress of the word 'bully' less affective.

The last one to show up was the blonde girl whom he had first met at the restaurant. She had dressed herself up as a zombie soccer player which, he had to admit, was odd. Most of the girls at his party were something pretty; fairies, ponies, princesses. Even though her costume was cool, it still struck him as weird.

She walked up to Hendrick and smiled slightly, handing out his present. "Happy birthday uhâ€|Hendreak, right?"

"Just call me Hiccup, umâ€|Morgan?" He said, slightly forgetting her name as he placed the gift on the table next to the door with the rest.

The small girl placed her hands on her hips, her soccer ball placed firmly under one arm. "Megan." She corrected him. "But my friends call me Camicazi."

Hendrick raised an eyebrow and turned to her. "Camicazi?" He asked, looking her over one more time. "Why do they call you Camicazi?"

"I don't know." She shrugged with a grin. "Maybe because I'm crazy on the field. Heya!" With a very strong arm, she threw her slightly deflated soccer ball at the boy's chest, causing him to fall over onto his back.

'\_And off the field, tooâ€|\_'

"Come on, kids!" Val said happily and loudly, making sure she was heard throughout the house.

Everyone ran into the dinning room and gawked at the cake. Three layers tall, covered with ghosts and vampires, werewolves and mummies, zombies and witches. Usually, Val would just choose one monster theme for his birthday cake. One year it was the boogiemán hiding under a bed. Another was a haunted house complete with ghosts and skeletons. Even though the whole Halloween theme was over done, the cake was still a masterpiece and made Hendrick smile happily.

Once the candles were blown out and the delicious looking treat was cut into, the kids ate their favorite flavors. The base layer was

made from chocolate while the middle was completely golden. The very top layer was big enough to cut into three pieces and was, much to Hendrick's enjoyment, strawberry cake with chunks of the fruit everywhere.

Fishlegs stuck with the plain chocolate, trying to keep it safe. Hendrick happily ate a slice of strawberry and watched Camicazi take a slice of each flavor, mix it in a bowl, and eat giant scoops of the strange creation. Steven and Trevor sat not too far from the three, talking as they stuffed their faces with ice cream and cake.

Hendrick chuckled as small bits of frosting flew from Steven's mouth and landed all over Trevor. "Snotlout." He said, his voice muffled by the food in his mouth.

"Snot\_lout\_?" Fishlegs laughed slightly. "Why Snotlout?"

The birthday boy shook his head and swallowed the cake. "I meant Snotlout." He whispered to his friend. "He's just so loud when he talks, it makes my ears bleed."

"I like Lout better." Camicazi whispered, leaning into the conversation. "Sounds more like an insult."

The rest of the party wasn't as bad as Hendrick originally thought. Steven "or, rather, Snotlout" did try to embarrass him in front of everyone, but, the embarrassment didn't last long. Mainly because he laughed right along with them. Yeah, sure, it hurt at first to see almost everyone laughing at him because of the water dripping from his chin when Snotlout poured the bucket load on him. But, he wasn't going to let him win. At least, not today. Some other day, yeah, Hendrick was sure he'd win. Today was his birthday, though, and he was determined to have somewhat of a good time with his two friends.

To get back at Snotface Snotlout, Camicazi poured hot sauce in his can of soda. It caused Val to get angry at the partygoers but, it was worth seeing the pig nosed boy run around screaming with his tongue hanging out like an animal.

As more kids started leaving, the greater it was. Within two hours, the only ones that were left were Camicazi and Fishlegs. And Hendrick didn't mind a bit. The three sat together and played a few games. First, they started off with board games. Which didn't really go well with Fishlegs since little Camicazi hardly ever shut up. They then switched to video games in the hopes that she'd be too focused on the screen to open her mouth. It didn't help one bit. She'd jump around screaming at the screen, telling her character to get their head on their shoulders. It eventually ended with the trio watching a scary movie. It calmed the smallest guest down enough so that the rest of them could stare at the television in peace.

Near the end of the movie, he meant to just blink. He didn't mean to leave his eyes closed and fall asleep, leaning back against the couch. But he did. And his friends did as well. It was one of those moments where you wished you had a camera.

Val smiled when she first saw the three. Then the doorbell rang and reality sunk in. She woke up both Fishlegs and Camicazi, helped them

to the front door, and picked up her own son, placing him in his own bed. Steinn, Hendrick's father, leaned against the doorframe, watching his wife tuck their son into his overly sized bed.

"Think he had a good birthday?" He asked in a slight whisper.

She smiled and nodded, moving some hair from Hendrick's face. "I think so. He sure looked like he was having fun."

Steinn nodded as well, stood up completely, and walked to their bedroom. Val waited for a moment before following him. It wasn't long after she closed the door that Hendrick opened his eyes. He laid there on his bed, his eyes and mind waving between awake and asleep as he listened to the noises in the next room. The incoherent conversation slowly drowned into nothing more than loud snoring. When he could hear it clearly and keep his eyes open for more than two minutes, he slipped into his slippers, pulled on his robe, and walked up into the attic where Jack sat waiting.

He was tapping at the mirror's glass so long, it made an indent that stuck out on his end. Hendrick rubbed his hand over the place where Jack poked his finger and began to wonder just what his hand felt like. Was it as smooth as the glass or was it rough like oil paintings?

"Hiccup? What's wrong?" Jack asked, watching the newly appointed eleven year old.

Hendrick shrugged his shoulders and continued rubbing the bump. "Hey, Jack? How did you get stuck in this mirror?"

"I told you beforeâ€¦I don't remember." He sighed as he leaned his head against the glass. "I just woke up here."

"Woke up?"

The teen nodded and looked over at the boy, smiling to see he got his full attention. "Yeah. I just woke up in here. Tried to get out a few times but all that got me was a slightly moving mirror."

The brunet stared at him for a minute then looked over the glass again. "What was the last thing you remember?"

His friend's face twisted and turned and winced and relaxedâ€¦so many emotions passed through him, it was too much to catch up with. Finally, Jack sighed and placed a hand up to the mirror's glass. "The last thing I remember was a bunch of water and iceâ€¦" He placed his forehead right above his finger tips. "I remember thinking I was going to dieâ€¦"

Hendrick froze and looked over Jack's face. "Wâ€¦what happened? What made you think that?"

"Don't knowâ€¦" He closed his eyes and saw the fuzzy pictures in the back of his mind. A familiar girl reaching out to him, her face completely blurred out. "I was ice skating with my sister and then everything went black. When I woke up, I was in this mirror."

"Were you always in this house?"

Jack shook his head. "No. At first, I was in a cabin. Not for long, though. Some people moved me into a barn. Then I was moved to this house." He opened his eyes and looked around the attic. "This place was a home for a while. Until the state bought it and used it as a museum." He smiled happily and almost proudly. "\_I\_ was the main attraction."

Hendrick scuffed. "\_You\_? Well, I guess that makes sense. Nobody can see their reflection so, of course you'd cause attention."

He laughed slightly at the boy's comment, staring down at him. "Yeah, I guess I would, huh?"

The years hardly showed on Jack himself, but, it did on the mirror. It was clear that the silver was coming off very fast in the back and that the wood would soon completely rot away, no matter how many drawings and paint stains it had. And that's when he felt it. This small ping strike his chest. He knew that his time with Jack was limited, very limited. The mirror might not last another two years. And, like a selfish child in a toy store, he felt tears come to his eyes. He sniffled and tried to push back the lump in his throat, but, it didn't work as planned.

"Hiccup? Hiccup, what's wrong?"

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: On to writing more chapters! - ADAM\*\*

\*\*Reviews = Motivation = Chapters\*\*

### 3. Holidays, happings, and old people

\*\*A/N: I'm really sorry for leaving this long without a word. In good news, we have internet at home again so I'll be updating more often. I tried really hard with this chapter. Enjoy.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Years can pass by as if they were minutes. One second, a child could be on the ground crying over their scrapped knee, their bike laying at their side and then you blink and you're the one that's crying at their graduation or wedding. It goes by even more when you don't even take notice that the clock is there.<p>

A week and a half after his party, Hendrick went out trick-or-treating with his friends. His mother insisted she'd go with them, but, he talked her out of it. Being eleven now, it'd be weird to go out trick-or-treating with your mom holding your hand. You'd get laughed at by everyone.

Camicazi went as a zombie soccer player; the same costume she used for Hendrick's birthday party. Fishlegs decided to go as a bumble bee instead of a lobster. The smallest of them tried her hardest to convince him to go as something scary, something more Halloween like. It stopped when he told her that bees are scary; he was allergic and knew that if one stung him, he could very well possibly die. She knew it was hopeless to convince him otherwise after hearing that. Hendrick went as the same dragon he was for his birthday. He was

happy to come out of the house looking better than he did during his party.

Half way through the night, the three were caught by Snotlout and what looked to be his older brother. Fishlegs began telling Hendrick about him since he had known Snotlout since the first grade. The fifteen year old that walked with the human pig was known as Dagur. His real name was unknown to Fishlegs since he never spoke it and nobody has ever heard it. One time, when he went to the toy store with his mother, he saw Snotlout and Dagur an isle away. The youngest of the siblings was following his mother while the oldest was busy ripping the heads off dolls then tearing their hair out. He never really paid attention to his baby brother and would often pretend to forget his name. Sometimes, you could hear the shouts that came from Dagur if you went outside at night. But tonight, he wasn't saying much of anything.

They quickly turned around and found a different route to take. When they went back to Hendrick's, they poured all of their treats onto the living room floor and began trading. Camicazi constantly stared off into the distance until Fishlegs looked away, trying to find what she was concentrating on. Which was a big mistake on his part since, whenever he did look away, she took what she wanted from his pile and hid it under her own. Hendrick witnessed this, but said nothing in fear that Camicazi would put him in a headlock if he did.

After all the trading was done and his friends were gone, Hendrick made his way up to the attic to share his stories with his most closest friend. He sat there for hours just telling him about the night. About Dagur and Snotlout, about Camicazi and Fishlegs, about the costumes he had seen, and, most of all, the candy he had gotten. He dumped all the candy he had received on the floor between them and picked out his favorite ones.

Jack stared at the strange treats. "What do they taste like?" He asked, pressed up against the mirror's glass.

"Wellâ€¦" Hendrick swirled a piece of caramel in his mouth as he tried to think of the right words. "It's hard but smooth and it's sweetâ€¦but not as sweet as chocolate. It's almost like honey only it tastes better. Have you never tasted caramel?"

The teen shook his head. "No. The greatest sweets I remember were peppermints."

"Well, when I get you out of there, we'll eat all the chocolate and caramel and stuff that you want." He said, smiling as he popped a fun sized kit-kat bar in his mouth. "And we'll go watch movies and play games like hopscotch. Everything will get better."

The child tried his hardest to make it seem things were getting better. He would press his hand up against Jack's on the glass and tell him that he could feel it. When, actually, he couldn't. He would continuously try to push food in through the mirror's glass and would smile, telling his friend that he felt it almost go through that time; even though the surface wouldn't budge a bit.

Thanksgiving came faster than expected. Family members from all over the world showed up; Uncles, Aunts, cousins. Even Gobber showed up after picking up Old Wrinkly from the airport.

Old Wrinkly was Hendrick's grandfather on his mother's side of the family. His true name was unknown to the boy. All he knew was that people started calling him Old Wrinkly when Hendrick was finally old enough to talk. He obtained the name when he was watching his grandchild one summer afternoon. After putting the boy to bed for a nap, he went back downstairs to make himself some lemonade. Right as he sat down to watch television, he heard the child upstairs calling out 'old wrinkly' and the name stuck ever since.

Val spent all day cooking, cleaning, and even putting the finishing touches on her decorations. They were brand new, of course, since the family had just moved to America that year.

Camicazi and Fishlegs sat with Hendrick in the living room, watching the Thanksgiving parade on the television. "So, what is this holiday about?"

"It's about how the English came and forcibly took the land away from the Indians." Camicazi said as she ate a handful of popcorn.

Fishlegs looked down at her with shock. "No, it is not." He cleared his throat. "It was to celebrate the harvest and get ready for the winter ahead by eating enough so they'd gain fat. They also hunted enough to get animal pelts which they wore to keep themselves warm as well."

"And then the Pilgrims came along and ruined it all for the Indians."

"Camicazi! That's not what happened!" He crossed his arms. "The Pilgrims landed and the Native Americans offered to share their feast with them."

Hendrick sat there, listening to the two argue about what really happened. Strangely enough, they didn't teach it before the school break. They just said to have a happy Thanksgiving and that they'd see them next week.

Their first Thanksgiving was a bigger hit than they originally thought. Steinn, Gobber, and a few of Hendrick's uncles played football out in the backyard after eating. He had watched the game once before and he didn't remember so much physical contact. There was so much pushing, shoving, kicking, and even punching that he wondered if they were playing the same game Old Wrinkly and Camicazi were watching. His father asked him to join in, but, he said no and went to go watch the rest of the parade in the kitchen.

Surprisingly, their table was long enough for everyone to sit at. Except for the children, of course. They were in the living room sitting at the kids' table, unfortunately. The table was small but big enough for Hendrick, Fishlegs, and five much younger cousins. Camicazi had rushed off to sit on the couch to eat while her mother and the other adults weren't looking. Every few minutes, she'd glance over at her friends, watching them as the younger kids sprayed whipped cream all over the two. After she was done her first plate, though, she helped them sneak over to the couch. Hendrick and Fishlegs didn't enjoy it as much as she did "due to being forced

to watch the rest of the football game " but, they liked it better than being pelted with potatoes.

Some of the Christmas customs surprised them. As soon as snow started to fall, carolers came knocking at their door. They didn't really know what to do at first. Hendrick just stood there and stared at them the first night, wondering just what they were doing. Him and his parents sung Christmas carols, but, never to others. Especially strangers.

He asked Jack about everything that night; the stuff one usually does during an 'American Christmas', the reason why these people kept singing at their doorstep. It was hard to hear him when Jack started answering. The mirror had started to frost around the corners and sides. And when the child went to warm it up, they never went away. Frost even started to appear on Jack himself. His lips were even more purple and his skin was paler than snow. That's when Hendrick spent almost every night up in the attic.

Val and Steinn couldn't explain it. In the middle of the night, one of them would wake up and look for their son. For the first few days, they would look in the obvious places; the kitchen, living room, and study. It took them a while before they just went right up into the attic. At one point, Val asked her son if he wanted to move into the attic. But he would say no, just leave it. It was his special place. He didn't want it to be as common as his bedroom was.

When the holiday actually came, the place was fully decorated. The tree was bright with blue lights and mismatch ornaments, the air was full with the scent of freshly baked cookies, everything felt right with the world and there wasn't that much of a weight on Hendrick's shoulders anymore. He assumed it was the Christmas songs and eggnog. And, it might have actually worked.

The child spent most of Christmas Eve down in the living room watching shows that only came this time of the year. Every commercial, he would jump up and go into the kitchen, checking on the cookies him and his mother were making. Gingerbread and sugar, chocolate chip and peanut butter; they made all sorts of cookies to give out to neighbors. When they were all done, Val offered him one of each, but, he said he was alright. Truthfully, he felt guilty every time he ate sweets. Whenever he did, the first thing on his mind was to save some for Jack. Then he'd remember that Jack couldn't eat sweets. Couldn't eat or drink anything. So, he had stopped eating and drinking all of his favorite things.

Hendrick spent the night up in the attic, curled up next to the space heater and his little night light. "Have you ever seen Santa, Jack?"

The teen looked down at the boy and smiled, shaking his head. "I don't remember"

It was hard to hear him talk now. Almost as if he was trying to speak through a wall. And his body language was limited. Every now and then he'd move his shoulders or his clothes would ripple but, other than that, it was like he was frozen. They hardly played games anymore and just 'talked'. He didn't think Jack minded. The mirror's spirit seemed happy to hear his friend speak.

Christmas morning came within the blink of an eye. For all he had known, Hendrick had only been asleep for a minute or so. He smiled when he saw the sun peek over the horizon and started running downstairs when he heard his parents talking about waking him up. Looking inside the living room, his jaw dropped to the floor. Presents were scattered all over the floor, their shiny bows blinking when they caught the lights from the tree. He stood there for a good ten minutes before his mother urged him to start unwrapping them. Being an only child had its advantages sometimes and he happily pulled out art supplies, tinkering tools, and video games that all had his name on them.

There was enough stuff to fit four large boxes when he was finished. His stocking looked oddly shaped due to pulling everything out then re-stuffing it again so that he could take his small treasures upstairs later. But, for now, he was just happy playing and checking out a few of the things he had gotten. Val and Steinn rushed into the kitchen to get breakfast ready for everyone as guests started pouring in from the front door. Camicazi and Fishlegs, Gobber and Old Wrinkly, even their bosses came for the little Christmas party.

Camicazi looked over Hendrick's presents, picking a few up and looking them over. "Why did you ask for tools?" She asked, swinging a wrench around. "You can't really play with these."

"I make stuff with them." He answered as he tried to hide a few things. "I like making things."

"I like breaking things." She smirked and held up a deflated soccer ball with gold writing on it; more than likely a signature from a famous soccer player. "Accidentally popped this ten minutes after I got it."

"What did you do to it?" Fishlegs asked, petting his new pet ferret, Horror, that sat in his lap. "Did you stab it with a pitchfork?"

Camicazi shrugged. "Not my fault my mom decorates with sharp objects."

"What exactly \_does\_ she decorate with?" The brunet asked.

She held out her hand and tapped each finger as she named everything on her living room walls. "Knives, swords, axes, helmets with horns, deer heads-"

"Alright, alright, we get it." Fishlegs rolled his eyes.

Hendrick was surprised to say the least. His parents just started letting him eat with a butter knife a year or two ago. Sure, they had some Viking memorabilia hanging around here and there to show how proud they were of their heritage but, they were all in glass cases or were so high up, there was no way the child would ever reach them.

It felt odd having his friends and family around two business men in suits and ties. He was scared for a little while that Camicazi would get his parents fired. She shoveled in her food when it first came out then started throwing it around to see if Horror would catch it



before it hit the floor. At one point, she had to be forcibly excused from the table by Steinn.

For the rest of the day, the adults stayed in the dinning room, talking business and making plans while the children settled in the living room, playing board games and hide-and-seek. Old Wrinkly stared out the window in the living room, silently smoking his pipe as if the kids weren't there. He didn't speak a word until his grandson sat across from him, staring out the window as well, trying to see what the other saw.

"There is a sadness between you two." Old Wrinkly said. He had taken up fortune telling, ghost talking, and all the like in his old age. "What is wrong?"

Hendrick jumped slightly at the comment. There were times where his grandfather was right about certain things and then there were times where he tried really hard to be right when he was really, really wrong. "Umm I don't know what you mean."

"You can't hide something like that forever, you know." He pointed his pipe up the stairs and spoke in a whisper so low, the child was surprised he could hear it. "I saw your friend in the mirror. Also saw your little makeshift bed. You shouldn't be sleeping up there; those bags under your eyes will get worse."

"I don't have any friend up there." Hendrick crossed his arms. "And I don't sleep up there."

Old Wrinkly shrugged and placed the pipe back in his mouth. "Alright," He said. "you don't."

There was a silence between them for a moment. It wasn't completely quiet in the room of course since Fishlegs and Camicazi were violently playing a video game not to far away but, they didn't even notice.

The eleven year old sighed. "Fine, I do. But for Gods sake, please don't tell anyone. Nobody else will understand."

His grandfather nodded with a smile, blowing out a circle of smoke. "Very unusual gift you've got. Talking to the dead, that is. Definitely inherited it from me."

"Talking to the dead?"

"Oh, yes. You come from a long line of ghost seers and talkers. Most children can see spirits at such a young age but, you'll see them for much longer." He took a puff from his pipe. "A blessing and a curse"

Old Wrinkly continued on but Hendrick just stared off into nothingness. At first, he thought that Jack was just a figment of his imagination; a friend for him to play with in this strange, new country. Now that he knew Jack was real, he felt his heart become heavy and his mind began to race with many thoughts. What killed his friend? Why was he stuck in that mirror? Was there anyway to help him? Could

"you bring back the dead?" He whispered without really knowing his

mouth was moving.

The old man looked down at the boy with a raised eyebrow, stopping mid-sentence. "Bring back the dead? You can't do that, little one. It's not possible."

"But what about all those people who died so young?" Jack's face stayed in his mind's eye. There was hardly a wrinkle on him or any sign that he was over seventeen. "You've been studying this stuff for years; isn't there a way to bring them back?"

Old Wrinkly's brow fluffed in concern and he blew out a puff of smoke, staring back out the window. "Hendrick, you cannot bring the dead back to life. It would be going against nature and would be horrible for the corpse as well as everyone else. All those people who watched their loved ones pass, grieved, and accepted it would go insane just by hearing their voice." He coughed slightly, looking at his grandson. "We all must live and we all must die in our own time. Those who have passed so young are tragedies, yes."

The man nodded his head and bit his lip as he remembered hearing his daughter, Hendrick's mother, cry over the phone many times. She had gotten pregnant seven times and lost almost every baby in a miscarriage. It was hard to see her bury six un-newborns. They almost had to bury the seventh but, thankfully, he pulled through and was now sitting across from him; worry covering his face like a thick mask.

"But there is nothing we can do other than ease their souls. Make things easy for them. Help them cross over into paradise." Old Wrinkly stood up with a freezing cold pipe in hand. "Your friend left this world with regret. It is your job to find out how to help."

\* \* \*

><p>Summer was one of the best times in the world. First of all, there was no school. And no school meant a lot less Snotlout, homework, and hidden anxiety. Second, there was more time to hang out with his friends.<p>

There were pictures hung up all over his wall of the three of them at the beach, at the amusement park, everywhere. He could tell which ones he took, which ones Fishlegs took, and which ones Camicazi took. Hendrick always took simple photos. Some were just of rides they were on while others were of them looking off in different directions. Fishlegs only took a few pictures. Mainly, they were of machinery, animals, and generic group photographs of them in front of famous landmarks in the state. Camicazi seemed knowledgeable of taking photos but, didn't seem to try too hard at times. Most of the pictures were fuzzy and, if you didn't know what was going on at the time, completely inappropriate for children not yet thirteen.

There was one photograph on his wall, though, that stood out against all the rest. It was when the mirror seemed to defrost and Jack could actually move. He was there, staring off into the distance, smiling away without a care in the world just like how he was supposed to. It was, by far, Hendrick's favorite picture on his wall.

Summer was also one of the busiest times he had ever been through. He went to the library at least three times a week to look over the city

records; birth and death certificates, hotel registration books. There were even some photographs of old residents of the town. Every time he saw the name Jack, his heart would stop and he'd stare at the name for at least five minutes before noticing that the last name was wrong. He would then sigh and continue on his search for the history of his friend.

There were a lot of days where he just sat around the house and did nothing. Most of those days, he'd be up in the attic, talking with Jack and playing simple games with him like always. And as the summer came to a close and school was just around the corner, that's basically all he did.

The entire attic had become a sort of play room slash study for Hendrick. When summer first started, Val had bought him a desk, three bean bag chairs, a television, Christmas lights, and a shelf to put up there.

He leaned back in his green bag chair and looked up at Jack who was watching the television with wide eyes like always. "School is coming soon." The boy said, just to break the silence between them.

"Yeah, I know. And then I'll be up here alone again." Jack sighed and smiled. "While you're off in the world. Without me again."

Hendrick rolled his eyes, chuckling lightly. "It's only from seven to two, you big drama queen."

"It seems a lot longer when you're all by yourself." He said. "When you're alone like this, there's nothing really you can do. Except sit here and watch tv. And even then, I can't change those channels."

"Then why don't you take a nap?"

"I don't sleep."

'\_He doesn't eat or sleep?\_' Hendrick thought to himself. "Then what do you do when I go to bed?"

Jack shrugged. "I wait for you to wake up." The teen sighed and leaned against the mirror's glass, keeping his eyes on the television. "And I know what you're thinking, Hiccup, you're not staying up all night just so that I'm not alone."

"I-I was not thinking that!"

"You're really bad at lying, you know." He smiled down at the frustrated brunet. "That's a good thing. And stop getting so upset, you'll get yourself sick."

The child couldn't help it. He crossed his arms over his chest and leaned even further back into his bean bag. "Well, have you ever tried?" Hendrick whispered.

"What?"

"Have you ever tried sleeping?" He looked up at him, turning the volume on the television down. "It isn't that hard. You just need to

lean back, close your eyes, and imagine impossible things. Things that you could only dream about."

Jack nodded his head with a wide grin. "Alright. I'll try it."

There was silence again for the longest time. Every once in a while, Hendrick would stand up and walk around, just to stretch out his legs. Sometimes he even pulled out board games like Candy Land and played with his friend. They didn't really talk much after that. Mainly just the usual things: if Jack remembered anything else about his past, how Fishlegs and Camicazi were. There was nothing out of the ordinary. The teen could still only remember bits and pieces, beginnings of names that held no faces. And Hendrick's friends were still the same; Fishlegs still being a nerd with him, Camicazi making fun of it and getting into trouble.

He had decided to eat dinner downstairs for once when the time came. His father began asking him about the future, what he wanted to be when he grew up. There was much talk about it and a small fight broke out between Val and Steinn. Of course, Hendrick just finished his dinner, cleaned his plate and cutlery, and returned to the attic.

The white haired young man in the mirror was leaning against the glass when he walked in. His eyes were closed and he was as still as a floating fish. Finally, he looked the way he was; dead.

Hendrick sat down and stared at him for the longest time, his grandfather's words repeating over and over in his head.

'\_Your friend left this world with regret. It is your job to find out how to help.' \_

But what could Jack possibly regret? He didn't even seem to know the meaning of the word. He always carried himself in the happiest way; a smile almost always on his face and a chuckle every other word. And whenever he talked about the memories he had, they were always good ones. Like him and his sister playing hopscotch everyday.

Then again, there were times where he didn't seem right. Where the smiles he sent out seemed fake, forced, not as happy and his laughs were not as full of life. Hendrick placed a hand on the glass as he thought of all the things Jack might not be telling him. Maybe he started a family with a wife and a son and a daughter. Perhaps he regretted not spending enough time with his sister. Or he possibly just hated leaving this world too soon.

His friend opened his eyes and stared at him. "Hey." He said.

The brunet nodded and smiled. "Hey. Were you sleeping?"

"I was trying." Jack shrugged. "Wasn't really working out."

"Ohâ€¦I see. I'm sorry." Hendrick plugged in the Christmas lights that lit the entire attic in a soft, colorful glow before sitting down. He leaned against the rotting frame of the mirror carefully and closed his eyes.

The other floated there and stared at him contently, raising an eyebrow. "Hiccup?" He asked in a whisper.

"Yeah?"

"What do \_you \_dream about when you go to sleep?"

Hendrick cleared his throat and shrugged. "Well, it's different every night." He sighed as he opened his eyes, thinking about dreams he had. "Some nights, I'm flying through the air on a dragon. Other nights, I don't have dreams. They're more like nightmares. I'll be sitting there in this darkness with no one around. Sometimes, I have nightmares where I'm buried alive and no one can hear me."

Jack frowned, placing his hand on the mirror's glass. He didn't like hearing about nightmares. It made him feel even more hopeless, more useless. "What's the best dream you've ever had?"

"Hmmmâ€¦" The child thought for a moment before smiling. "The best dream I've had so far is where you're here out of the mirror and doing things that normal people do nowadays. Like go to the movies or swim or go to school."

He nodded, watching his young friend close his eyes. "That sounds like a good dream to dream."

Jack closed his eyes as well and leaned against the glass again. He couldn't sleep, that was certain, but, it didn't stop him from daydreaming. And, as the night went on, he could see him and Hendrick just simply walking down a hill covered in snow behind his eyelids. He could hear the two of them talking and laughing and just being happy without a glass between them.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: I love the books. 'nough said. - ADAM\*\*

\*\*Reviews = Motivation = Chapters \*\*

#### 4. Beginning of the school year

\*\*A/N: About freaking time, right? Sorry, guys. This fic has the longest chapters out of all of them. The longest taking up eleven pages on Microsoft Word while the rest of the fics on here reach up to seven at the most. Eight if they're lucky. This at least touches page ten each chapter. And my computer is old so it's hard for me to write when it says it's full of memory, please save and I save yet it doesn't really and I lose five pages worth of stuff. Yeah. Anyway, I'm going to update more, I promise. HiJack stuff in the next chapter, that I promise too.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Are you <em>sure<em> you have everything?"

This must have been the twelfth time he had asked. Hendrick rolled his eyes as he stuffed an extra pencil into the front pouch of his backpack. Since he was eleven now and was going on to the sixth grade, he found it un-cool to have his mother walk him to the bus stop and annoying to have her remind him to get up, get dressed, congratulations, it's school time! So, he woke himself up that

morning, got dressed by himself, and packed his bag without much help. The only help he got was from Jack and it was just for a few things; his planner and money for lunch. But, after everything seemed to be in it's right places and his backpack got heavy, the teen kept asking if he had everything.

The brunet looked over at the clock and sighed. There was no way he was going to make the bus in time. And if he asked his parents for a ride, they might deem him irresponsible and start waking him up in the morning and hold his hand as they walked to the bus stop.

"Yes, I'm sure I have everything. Thank you, Jack." Hendrick threw his backpack over his shoulder and bent down to tie his shoes even tighter. "Do you want me to leave the television on for you?"

Jack shook his head. "No, I'm fine." In all honesty, the things they showed on the news scared him. The bombings, the school shootings, the deaths in the war over seas; it was something he didn't need today. No, he'd worry himself out of existence if he watched the television.

"Well, alright. I'll see you when I get home from school." And with that, the child left, running as fast as he could.

Sure enough, the school bus past right by him, picked up the kids at his stop, and continued on its way. Hendrick looked down at his wristwatch; thirty-two minutes until the first bell. While walking, the school was about forty-seven minutes away and if someone were driving, twenty or so. He tried to figure out the chances of him getting there on time as he crossed the street, almost getting hit in the process.

Normally, he was never this fast. Whenever they had to run a mile in gym, he was always the last one to finish. When he was picked for canyon cross tag, he was always one of the first ones to be tagged. But, studies show that when you're late or being chased, you do run a bit faster than you normally would. With that in mind, he began picturing a horde of zombies or bullies running after him, just so that he'd be even faster than he already was.

Thankfully, he got there on time. The first bell rung the moment he was done getting a drink at the water fountain and he walk briskly off to class. It gave him a heart attack at first to see his friends sitting on either side of the only available desk in the room. He could only imagine the insanity that this new school year would have with all three of them in the same room. In a way, he was looking forward to it; even if it probably meant a lot of trips to the principle's office. As the last bell rang, he sat down between them and took out his notebook, pencil, and eraser.

He looked over at Camicazi who had already poked inky holes into her giant eraser with her pen. "Do you know who the teacher is this year?"

"No." She shook her head before smiling that evil smile of hers, showing that she was thinking of something. "Fresh start this year; new teacher, new pranks."

Hendrick rolled his eyes. "Wouldn't you want to make a good impression and end the year with a clean record?"

"Why would I do that when there are so many possibilities? I could stick thumbtacks in the cushion of the teacher's chair or steal all the chalk orâ€¦." She began laughing lowly, showing that she was thinking much too hard for anyone's good.

Camicazi was the sort of person that would do any sort of trick to anyone. Most of the time, she just stole simple things like necklaces or key chains off backpacks. Hendrick wondered sometimes why she would do such things and how far she would go to prank someone or steal something. During the summer break, when they were at the beach for the third time in a row, there was a group of kids out in front of a shack store. They saw how she took sunscreen and grapes from one family and dared her to go inside, steal them a few candy bars, and run out. She had done it, of course, without any trouble. But then they asked her to steal a few beers saying that they'd share with her if she wasn't caught. She refused. She did, indeed, have limits. There was no way she would ever take alcohol, cigarettes, or any sort of drug from a store. It brought peace to him knowing that she wouldn't turn down that path so soon.

The classroom door opened and shut behind their new teacher. At first, Hendrick thought that this man must have the wrong building; his tattoos went all the way down his arms, his flip flops hit his heels annoyingly, and he sat on the front desk like a punk from an old nineties movie. The only things that made him look remotely like a teacher was his short sleeved button up shirt and the tie that hung loosely around his neck.

With the thickest accent anyone could ever have, he proceeded to talk to the class about himself. "Hello everyone." It shocked Hendrick when he fully understood every word he said. "I'm your teacher this year. You can call meâ€¦Mr. Bunnymund." He wrote his name on the chalkboard behind him.

"Now, this year is gonna be different." Mr. Bunnymund patted the chalk dust off on his pants. "Different rules, different expectations."

"This should be goodâ€¦" Camicazi sighed, laying her head down on her desk.

Small chuckles rang around the room at her comment, causing the teacher to silently stare at the preteen before continuing on with his introduction speech. "Rule one: you are only allowed to bring food in here if ya have enough for the whole class."

"So, I can order pizza then. Yes!" Camicazi sat up in her seat, smiling at the thought of ordering at least three large pizzas. She could practically hear the roars of adoring fans and taste the melted cheese now.

Even more children giggled and laughed at her comment. Hendrick's face began turning an embarrassing red and he glanced over at Fishlegs who was in the front of the class for comfort. His friend only shook his head and mouthed out an apology, deeply sorry that he had to be the clear best friend in this situation. Friends always got hit as bad as the class clowns they are with. While the wild haired girl began bouncing in her seat at the future sound of victory, Hendrick only slid further down in his chair, the sound of shame and

name calling ringing in his ears.

Mr. Bunnymund didn't seem as amused as the other kids but didn't seem very angry at all either. He only walked over to Camicazi calmly as he continued his list of rules. "Rule two: homework must be passed in within a week."

"Make it two and we have a deal." Now she was just playing with him. She leaned back in her chair, resting her feet up on her desk as almost the whole class began laughing. All except Fishlegs and Hendrick of course, who were just trying to hide their faces, embarrassed for their friend.

"And finallyâ€|"

Everyone expected him to say 'no horsing around' or 'no talking back'. They expected him to tell the little clown to march herself right down to the front office where the principle usually hung out. When he stopped at her desk, everyone kept their mouths shut and got their throats ready for the collective 'ooo0000' that was tradition when someone was sent to see the principle. But it never happened.

Mr. Bunnymund stopped, smiled, and patted the child on the head. "â€|try your hardest."

Everyone was so confused, so dumbfounded, that some of them didn't understand and started the 'ooo000' anyway. When nobody else joined in, those who had started slowly stopped and slunk down in their seats.

Hendrick quickly sat up and looked over at Fishlegs who gave him an unknowing shrug. They were both as clueless as the rest of the class. But Camicazi wasn't like the rest of the class. She didn't look around with twisted faces and raised brows. She stared ahead and watched the teacher walk back to the front of the class in shock. Her eyes were wide and her mouth was shut for once. It was a sight that was very rare indeed.

And the look of utter shock continued for a few more days and was, in fact, passed onto her friends who stared at her with the same sort of face as she passed in paperwork on time. It was a new sort of Camicazi they saw walking in everyday for almost a week; her clothes were not crazy but rather lazily put on, her hair strangely put into a ponytail even though it didn't hold very well. At one point, Fishlegs brought a camera to school so that he could take a picture of this new Camicazi. Of course, it did not last for long. By the end of the first week, she was back to her crazy clothes and her untamed, untied hair. And slowly, her personality came out of the shock and she went back to being the class clown only with straight 'A's this time.

Hendrick's grades weren't as perfect as his friends, sadly. 'B's and 'C's were plastered all over his name every time a test was handed back. If only they understood how hard he had to look through record books to look for a certain teen's name. Then they wouldn't care in the slightest that his papers were half finished and late beyond due dates.

But other than that, August seemed to roll by like nothing and so



didn't the first part of September. Everything seemed like it was on a high speed chase that never seemed to end. That was, until Hendrick's walk home one afternoon. He had kept his nose in a rather old record book all day that day, hardly looking up, ignoring any words and food that came his way. It was normal behavior for those who knew him, but it also worried those who thought this to be just another interesting book. No matter how many times Camicazi hit the brunet in the head with carrots at lunch time, he wouldn't look up. And the notes that piled on his desk from Fishlegs caused him detention. But he didn't seem fazed at all. He had a good feeling about this book. It showed not only names and dates, but pictures as well; drawn pictures that looked practically like photographs sat next to a page of information about that family.

Hendrick paused as he turned the page. His skin became pale and his eyes were wide and fixated on the picture of a small family; one mother, one child, one baby. The mother sported unnaturally short hair that cupped her face much like a bonnet, her baby fast asleep in her arms, and the little boy's hair swept a certain way that looked like the wind carried it off his face. He had a perfect grin on his face, his hands clenching the bottom of his mother's dress. Hendrick had seen this grin only once before and when he looked at the names, he couldn't believe it to be true.

\_Mary Overland\_

\_17 June 1675\_

\_Burgess, Pennsylvania\_

\_Widowed \_

\_Jackson Overland\_

\_10 April 1698\_

\_Burgess, Pennsylvania\_

\_Anna Overland\_

\_5 November 1702\_

\_Burgess, Pennsylvania\_

"This must be itâ€¦!" He whispered under his breath, so overjoyed that he just stopped in his tracks and stared. A small smile began dancing on his lips and a tiny, almost scuffed laugh escaped through his throat. "Oh my god, I found him."

Now there was a full name to the boy in the mirror. Now he was one step closer to freeing him from his glass prison. Everything was just going to come to him now and everything was going to get better and everything was going to be brighter.

And then, his hopes were brought down. All the plans he had washed away from his mind when he saw a single autumn leaf fall onto the book, covering the picture of the once happy family. Hendrick looked up at the tree that hovered over him. He had hardly noticed that the leafs were already turning. And leafs turning meant winter would come within a few weeks. His plans of talking to Jack and trying to help

him remember were ruined. At least, a good portion of it was.

The mirror Jack was contained in seemed like a fish tank. When Hendrick looked, he could see rocks on the spirit's side of the glass. Bubbles always came out of the teen's mouth when he spoke and sometimes, an actual fish would float by. He had always wonder why this was ever since the first meeting with Jack.

"Maybe something with his bodyâ€¦" He wondered aloud, beginning his walk back home a little faster. His time with his best friend was limited now. Since the mirror was Jack's fishy prison, it would freeze and cause him to speak no more than a few words in a low whisper during the winter.

When the eleven year old got home, he quickly walked through the door, kicked his shoes off, threw his backpack to the ground, and rushed upstairs and into the attic. His mother tried to stop him as he was half way up the stairs but just smiled as he called down that school was good and that he'd do his homework later. Steinn always said Val was too soft on that boy, that she let him on a very loose leash but she didn't care. That was her baby boy and she was going to let him as loose as she wanted.

Hendrick tossed the book onto his beanbag chair that sat next to the antique seeing glass, closing the door behind him as he jotted over to the mirror that held his best friend. "I found you! I found you!"

Jack lifted his head from the glass and looked at him, smiling. "Uh, yeah. I've been here for a while, Hic."

"No, no. I meant in the books. I found you!" The brunet picked up the book from his chair as he sat down and flipped through the pages, showing him the most important one of all. "See? That's you and your baby sister, Anna, and your mom!"

The spirit shook his head as he looked down at the picture. At some level, he didn't want to believe it. But at the same time, he really did. He wanted to know who he was and who his mother was and who his sister was. He wanted to remember them for their sake. Still, for the sake of his own sanity, he didn't want to remember any of it. Jack wanted to believe that this is who he was. That he was just trapped and that he'd come out of this mirror with a normal body and start a normal life. Or as normal a life as he'd ever get. The news both brought him immense happiness and total despair. He was alive, he did have a normal life and now he was dead.

Silently, he shook his head and leaned back, rubbing the side of his neck. Hendrick just continued talking about how this was good news and that now, he could find out how to free him and why he was in the mirror in the first place and all the things they could do together when he got out.

"â€¦and you just need to remember what year it might have been that you died!" Hendrick said. "Then we'll follow the history of this mirror an-"

"Hiccup." Jack said firmly, looking at him with firm eyes. "I don't want to leave this mirror."

"Wâ€|what?" His friend would have done less damage if he had just punched him in the face. "Soâ€|so all that research I've been doingâ€|it was all for nothing?"

Jack shook his head and pressed his hands against the mirror's glass, his eyes going wide when he saw the hurt in his best friend. "No, it's not like that!"

"Then what is it like then, Jack?"

"I don't want to go away!" A huge relief was lifted off the spirit's chest. The biggest fear he had since he met Hendrick was finally known.

The silence between them grew thick and they sat there, staring at each other. Their eyes slowly became softer as they started to understand each other. And even though he didn't need to, Jack continued to speak his fear to the brunet.

"I'm scaredâ€|" He said. "I'm scared of leavingâ€|I don't want to leave. I don't want to be away from you. You're the best friend I've \_ever\_ had. You're the \_only\_ friend I've had in \_so long\_â€|"

Tears came to Jack's eyes but he quickly looked down at his hands, not wanting the person that meant so much to him see the small pools of water forming at the edges of his crystal blue orbs. "I want to stay with you."

Hendrick was more than a little brother to him. He was more than a friend. He wasn't really sure what he was, but he didn't want the amazing feeling of seeing him everyday fade into nothing. This jumping, palm sweating feeling of seeing the child smile when he won at a game or just seeing him smile at all felt amazing. It felt warm. Itâ€|made him feel alive. And there was no way he would ever give that up. Not for anything.

The other wasn't too sure how to feel about this. Hendrick was both happy that his friend wanted to stay but depressed that he was the one keeping him here. Jack deserved to live his after life in peace. He deserved to be in paradise with his family where he knew Jack would be happy. There was so much he deserved and it hurt him that he never got any of what he should be getting. Yet, the selfish part of the child began jumping for joy. His best friend would never leave him. Never. He'll never be alone again. No more awkward moving to cities where he didn't know anyone, no more having to play by himself. He had Jack and he'd always have him till the day he died.

'\_Orâ€|until the mirror falls apartâ€|\_' Hendrick looked over the frame of the antique, frowning that more of the wood had rotted off and the silver on the backing of the glass was fading just as fast. '\_Whichever comes firstâ€|\_'

"But don't you want to see your family, Jack?" He asked, trying to forget the pieces of wood that fell to the ground. "Don't you want to see your sister and your mom?"

"I do. But I don't want to leave you." Jack sighed and smiled down at him. The look on his brunet's face was clearly a mask. He knew he was worried so he thought of something quick. "Come on. Why don't you

play a video game? I'll watch and make funny comments~"

Hendrick tried to keep a straight face yet it is very hard to whenever Jack sang his sentences. "Alright, alright."

For years, he had been mustering up this courage. He had been standing there for half an hour, staring at his mother's back as she did the dishes. His throat had gone dry from the amount of times he opened and closed his mouth in order to try and form a sentence. Any sentence at all.

It wasn't until Val finally turned around and smiled a greeting that he blurted out what he wanted to say for almost forty minutes. Well, for almost nine years, actually. "I don't want a Halloween party!"

This took her by complete surprise. She stood there blinking at her son as she took in the request.

Ever since he was little, he always had Halloween birthday parties. In fact, it seemed like he was excited for them every year. One year when he was three, he asked almost everyday for seven months when his birthday was because he couldn't wait to put on his lion costume. And now he was asking for a different kind of party.

"W-wellâ€|" She said, staring at her clearly embarrassed son. "What kind of party \_do \_you want?"

Now it was Hendrick's turn to stand and blink. Truthfully, he didn't think he would get this far. He had hoped that his mother would tell him that he was speaking nonsense and that he needed to take out the trash or something.

"Uhhâ€|" He hummed. "A regular party would be nice. You know, with regular streamers and a regular cake with regular clothes. Justâ€|a party. Non themed."

"Non themed?" Val asked and smiled, ruffling his chocolate locks. "Alright then. Go make out your list of guests for your non themed party."

Oh by the gods, he had won. A blush tickled his cheeks until it over took every freckle on his face. He nodded and quickly ran up to the attic, digging his head into his beanbag chair with a slight scream. His embarrassment and worry floated off his chest.

Jack, who had been waiting for a while, smiled down at his friend. He leaned against the mirror's glass and chuckled at the pitiful scream the other emitted. Hendrick wasn't one of those smaller children that had a loud voice. No, everything seemed to match his height. Minus his eyes, of course. He reminded him of a mouse and this made his smile turn to a playful grin.

"So, how'd it go?"

"Perfect!"

"So what's the matter?"

"\_It went perfect\_" Hendrick looked up at him with a confused

face.

"Ohh. So, what kind of party are we throwing here?" Jack floated around for a bit, making gestures that symbolized each theme he asked. "Video game party? Pirate party? Movie party?"

"Non themed."

The spirit froze and stared at him, not amused. "Un themed? You mean a regular party?"

Hendrick smiled and sat properly in his bean bag chair, nodding. "Yup! Just a regular party with regular guests and regular everything."

Silence hung in the air. Tension made it harder for the brunet to breathe. He swallowed and stared at his friend feeling like he had just done something wrong even when he did nothing at all.

The other pouted and turned away from him, his frown showing itself in Hendrick's mind's eye as he spoke. "Well geeze, you're no fun. Not even a scary, ghost party?"

"Not even a scary ghost party."

"What's the fun in that?"

"Well, Jack, it's my party, not yours." Hendrick rolled his eyes. "When we have a party for you, you'll be able to choose whichever kind of theme you want. But for now, I'm choosing party themes."

Jack turned to stare at him, surprise written on his face. "A party? For me?"

The child shrugged as he turned on the television and the gaming station. "Well yeah. When we get you out of there, I'm gonna throw you a party."

For the longest time the two stayed silent. The spirit watched as his Hiccup played video game beyond video game. Everything from Call of Duty, which Jack liked the most since he could talk to other people, to Legend of Zelda, which Hiccup liked the most because of the many side quests.

When Hendrick was called down for dinner, the teen frowned. He hated being alone but he hardly ever showed it. He hardly ever wanted to show it. One of the last things he wanted was for his best friend to feel like he had to stay by his side no matter what. Even though he knew he would if he just asked the child to.

For about an hour he sat alone. He poked at the mirror's glass and tried his hardest to at least phase through it. He had to, he just had to. There was so much he wanted to do.

Jack wanted to go to one of those concerts and bang his head to the music. He wanted to buy a t-shirt and have the band sign every stitch of it. The teen wanted to go to the movie theater and watch Indiana Jones or Star Wars. Any movie would be fine, of course, but those series always had him wondering and dreaming. He wanted to visit the

museum about the Titanic. Pay his respects to a family member of a little girl he once knew. Once or twice he thought of visiting his old home, the first place he remembered being in. Most of all, he wanted to hug Hendrick, his Hiccup. Just at least pet his head to sleep or hold him tight during his nightmares. Even if it was just for a day, it'd be perfect.

When the eleven year old come back upstairs, Jack had already found comfort against the glass. He was curled up like a ball and his eyes were shut in a peaceful, dreaming manner. Hendrick couldn't help but smile at the sight until he saw a small piece of wood fall from the top of the frame.

He picked it up carefully with shaking hands and quivering lip. Softly, he rested his forehead against Jack's, trying to hold back his sobs. "Noâ€|" His mouth whispered though no sound came out. "Don't leave me."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: It's like 12:26 AM I should be asleep. Bahhhhhhhh. - ADAM\*\*

\*\*Reviews = Motivation = Chapters\*\*

## 5. Promises and hated hands(TRIGGERWARNING)

\*\*A/N: I am so sorry for the longest wait in forever. I have been having problems with my laptop. And the thing is, the pages aren't back to back. I'm counting them as they are in Microsoft Word. Which means, each chapter at least touches the tenth page. That's more than my other fics which hardly touch the sixth page in a document. And not only am I having problems with my laptop(which now turns off as soon as the charger is slightly unplugged from the laptop socket), but I was having problems with myself. I was in a deep state where I just couldn't form a sentence. I pushed myself and started a new fic, \*\*\*\*\_RePLAY\_\*\*\*\*, to help me gain more motivation. And it has. If you wish to read it, let me warn you, it's a PunkNerd AU fic through Jack's POV. Yeah, not all that great, but I need to try my hand at first person.\*\*

\*\*WARNING: THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING TRIGGERS\*\*

\*\*Mentioned family abuse\*\*

\*\*Molestation \*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Turning twelve had its ups and its downs.<p>

The first up, he was allowed to stay up till 9:30PM on school nights. So him going up and down from the attic didn't have to be a constant rerun of Mission Impossible. Another up side was that he was old enough, in his parent's eyes, to walk down to the corner store and back by himself.

One of the biggest downs was his birthday party. Sure, it was a

regular, normal, non themed birthday party like he was sure every other kid in the world had but it came with a price. His mother had not only invited Snotface Snotlout but she also invited his brother, Dagur over for the party.

Fishlegs had come over first that morning with a smile on his face and a gift under his arm. "Happy birthday, Hiccup!" He said happily, placing the present on the table. "Wow, it really is a normal party."

Green and blue streamers hung and wrapped around each other from every doorway, ceiling, and light fixture. Hendrick nodded and stuffed his hands into his pockets, happy at the fact he didn't need to wear special shoes that went with his costume. His toes wriggled slightly in his socks as he turned on his heels and began walking into the living room. Pin the tail on the donkey, a piñata, and ring toss game were set up across the large floor.

"I told you it was going to be." The brunet said and grabbed a fun sized bag of m&ms that was on top of a candy bowl. "No costumes, no themed games. Just us, maybe a movie or two tonight, and some candy." A kid's dream.

Camicazi was the second one to show up. Even though the invitation said that there were \*\*no costumes allowed\*\*, she still showed up in her zombie soccer player costume, a grin plastered on her face. "Hey there, Hiccup." She said, shoving a badly wrapped box in his chest.

"Uff! H-hey, Camicazi." Hendrick let out a small cough as he pulled the present away from his chest, placing it on the table. "Why are you in a costume?"

"Well someone has to be the life of the party!" She shrugged and looked back at him before turning to stare at the balloons that hung from curtain rods and the backs of the chairs. "Wowâ€|really dumb looking party. I liked your Halloween birthday better."

He rolled his eyes. Of course she did. "Well, it's my party so it's my choice." He crossed his arms and followed her into the kitchen.

Camicazi smiled and greeted Val as she poured herself a glass of punch. "My birthday is next month." She told Hendrick. "The theme is 'Hunger Games'."

'Greatâ€|' The still eleven year old groaned as he thought of her family hosting such a party.

She took a sip and leaned against the table, her hands and arms moving as she talked. "We're going to have piñatas hanging from trees and nurf guns and those fake bows and arrows. You get shot, you're dead and that means you get a smaller piece of cake." The twelve, soon to be thirteen, year old nodded with a smirk and eyes that said 'you're my first target' as she sipped her punch again.

Hendrick frowned. He wasn't very good at aiming. Or running. Or anything that was too athletic. He was more of a sit down and make things sort of kid. The typical 'always picked last' child in gym

class.

Val smiled and giggled slightly, placing another platter of goodies for them all on the table. Cupcakes that needed to cool before she frosted them. "Well that sounds very creative, Megan." She said, unaware that her child wasn't going to last two minutes in those games.

At that point, kids from his class began piling in without any sign of stopping. His mother even decided to leave the door open and stand outside, talking with other mothers as they walked up to drop their child off. The presents, mostly huge boxes, soon overflowed the table as they had last year. Camicazi placed her fifth cup of punch down on the floor and lifted a few, bringing them up to her ear and shaking them. One gave off no sound while another started to rip at her thumb.

Fishlegs walked over, frowning slightly. He held a cup of chips in one hand and a cup of candies in another. "Hey, Camicazi, you got to be careful with those. Those are Hiccup's. What if you break something?"

"I'm sure he'd understand." She shrugged, shaking another as Hendrick walked over to them. "I always break everything I touch."

The brunet frowned, playing with the frozen fudge mint cookies in his hands like a gambler would poker chips. "Please don't break too much." He groaned.

As Val smiled and laughed, saying goodbye to a parent, she walked in through the door, gaining the attention of the three. Just as they turned around, they regretted it deeply. Standing behind Hendrick's mother was Snotlout and his older brother, Dagur. The door slowly closed as their grins became wider, more evil and more horrific.

The rest of the party went on as the birthday boy had thought it would: terrifyingly bad. Every time they were near the ring toss game, Snotlout would trip, pouring his entire cup of punch on Hendrick, soaking his hair to his shorts. He changed at the very most three times before he stopped going over there to play. The piñata seemed even worse. Since it was his birthday, he went first and of course, ended up hitting Fishlegs upside the head with the piñata stick due to horrible directions and screams from the snot nosed boy. Camicazi ended up going next and hit Snotlout upside the head a few times as well as his stomach, pretending she thought it was the piñata even though she knew the truth. It gained her an hour in the corner, but it was worth seeing the punk's nose curved and blood dripping down past his lips.

Dagur surprisingly didn't do much. He mostly sat on the couch and watched television while everyone else mingled or played games. He took candy from other kids candy bags and tripped a few of them when they were running in front of the screen, but other than that, he wasn't so bad. Until it was time to for the cake.

Hendrick had just changed into another pair of clothes, his hair wet from quickly washing out the sticky punch as he walked into the dinning room and sat down. His father and mother stood around him, smiling as they placed the cake in front of him. Everyone took their seats and sang to him as he closed his eyes with a smile. His wish



that year was split in two. He leaned forward with the wish to have Jack by his side and pulled away, thinking a moment before he really leaned forward and blew his candles out, wishing that Snotlout would take Jack's place in his mirror.

The cake was three large layers tall; strawberry on top, golden in the middle, and chocolate on bottom, each having different frosting. Camicazi sunk her teeth wildly into a piece of strawberry with chocolate frosting. Fishlegs happily enjoyed his golden with strawberry and Hendrick grinned as he received his chocolate with vanilla. He cut and scooped the smaller end of the slice, eating it contently as he chatted with his friends about nothing in particular at all. Ice cream dripped down into the slice as Val went around and placed a scoop of different flavors on everyone's plate. About halfway through the party, Hendrick glanced up at the clock; 6:32 PM. He remembered his parents telling him every year how he was born two minutes before six in the pm. It had been early in Val's pregnancy and they thought he would die later on that night. Hendrick smiled. He had survived yet another year.

While the poor brunet was busy staring at the clock and popping cake in his mouth, Dagur decided to bring his paper plate to the trash. Of course, Snotlout's bad habit of bullying had to originate from somewhere and as soon as Hendrick felt something press into his chest, he knew just where. He gasped and leaned back, the drink he had been holding splashing onto the teenager. Snotlout chuckled from the other end of the room while Camicazi and Fishlegs stared with disbelief and horror.

"I'm sorry!" Hendrick said quickly, the signs of puberty showing as his voice cracked slightly.

Dagur shrugged and looked up at Val and Steinn apologetically. "Sorry for messing up the rug." He said.

He gestured with his eyes down toward the expensive looking rug under the table, a very sorry look in his eyes. To an adult who didn't know him any better, it would have looked real. But the other kids at the table knew much more and could see a faint spark of something terrible shine in his eyes.

Still, Steinn and Val shook their heads with a smile, saying that it was no problem. Hendrick's heart began to beat against his chest as he saw his own parents "whom he thought were smarter than that" fall right into Dagur's hands. His body stiffened as the teenager nodded and volunteered to get something to clean it.

"Hendrick, why don't you get cleaned up, too. That food coloring in the icing will set in and stain your clothes." Val explained, smiling as she watched her son cautiously follow behind Dagur.

It took some wordless, gesturing coaxing before Hendrick completely left the room, alone in the hallways with the famous monster of the streets. He muttered a 'this way' and headed up the stairs. At one point, before going to the bathroom, he glanced at the attic door. Part of him wished he could rush up there and just spend the rest of his party with his best friend; explaining to him more things about the outside world and how it's changed, playing video games with him and laughing about the comments he would make. But as soon as he felt the teen brush past him violently, he dismissed that part of him. If

Dagur knew, it could only mean bad news and maybe a broken mirror.

Hendrick tripped slightly as he walked into the bathroom, his heart sinking as the door shut behind him. He quickly walked over to the in-wall cabinet and pulled out a few towels, wetting them down.

Dagur groaned and took off his own shirt. "Such a sticky mess." He whispered, tossing it to the side with a slight grunt. "You're a sticky mess, too."

His body froze. Fingers lightly brushed the hem of his shirt though they didn't feel like fingers. More like knives carving into his side. He was so focused on biting his lip as not to scream at the knives, that he didn't notice his own shirt off and to the side. "We can't have the birthday boy being a mess, now can we?"

The words were like acid and he could feel his eardrums turning into liquid. Hendrick spun around when Dagur violently took his hand, placing it on his bare chest. He tried to pull away from the teen's burning grip, but he just didn't seem to be strong enough. With every try, the other squeezed harder and harder, causing the twelve year old to squeak and whimper.

His adolescent chest burned against his palms and he felt branded just like how he saw in games and in movies whenever someone did something wrong. Whatever words the older one was saying didn't make any sense. They were all jumbled and dripped off his tongue like vile saliva. He squirmed as his much bigger hand started to lightly stroke every part of Hendrick's exposed skin. The only words that came to his ears was 'must clean you up', but he felt dirtier by the second.

As his hand was forced to lower down to Dagur's pant line, he remembered one thing his parents taught him when he was younger. Scream 'fire' if someone was hurting you. It would cause people to run and police to come. So Hendrick threw his head back and screamed as loud as he could.

"Fire! FIRE!"

Thumps came from upstairs; Jack had must of heard it. Val and Steinn called out their son's name as they ran up the stairs. As soon as he saw his father come into the bathroom, everything started to fast forward like an old VHS tape.

Dagur threw himself back as Steinn approached him, screaming things he couldn't really make out. Hendrick's body gave out from under him and he just fell onto the floor, his limbs all shaking. Val ran to his side and stroked his burning hand, trying to speak soothing words to him even though his ears by then were numb. He stared at her, watching tears fall from her eyes. Did she feel the white hot pain that came from his hand? Was hers burning too? Slowly, he turned his head to the doorway where everyone stood.

Camicazi's bottom lip shook but the sadness didn't travel to her eyes, where a fire of revenge slowly started to burn. Fishlegs shook his head, staring at him with a true apologetic look. When Val stood up and started speaking wildly into her cell phone, that's when

Hendrick saw Snotfaced Snotlout. He stood there, glancing at him then at his brother then back down at his own crossed arms then back at him. It was almost as if he was taking the blame for what had happened, a guilty look sparking on his face.

Everything stayed silent as the police arrived, ushering everyone back downstairs. Things continued to stay that way as they took Dagur out of the room in handcuffs. Even while they seemed to question him, he was deaf to everything. He spoke but the words never made it to his ears. The pain in his burning hand pulled his focus back down and he stared at it for God knows how long. He just sat there after a while, silent with a blank face, staring down at his hand and wondering why on Earth isn't charred and black. Why isn't it smoking? Why isn't his skin peeling off down past his wrist?

Images flashed through his eyes but not everything had processed yet. His friends said their goodbyes, Camicazi and Fishlegs hugging him. His parents rubbed his back and brought him to his room. They didn't speak much to him, only whispering things that never made it to him anyway. They kissed his forehead and let him be by himself. After a while, his hands stopped shaking. Once his knees were calmed, he felt himself get up and walk slowly out of the room, heading up to the attic. Nobody stopped him and it was a surprise his parents didn't rush up the stairs when they heard him close the attic door.

When Hendrick got to the bean bag chair in front of Jack's mirror, he just laid there, staring at the ceiling. The scene played over and over in his head and he would glance down at his hand without a word. The silence seemed to break his deaf spell and the sound of the television downstairs loomed into his ears. That's when he turned onto his side and sat up, staring at the mirror's frame. He had been trying to escape his glass prison; parts of the frame had fallen onto the floor and he was tilted slightly to face more toward the left.

"Why?" The brunet whispered, looking up at him, almost pleading for an answer as he stared into his eyes. "Why?"

Jack could only shake his head. He tried to force the lump in his throat to go down, swallowing twice before he bit his lip. The only thing he knew was that his Hiccup was severely hurt by something someone did down at his party. He had heard the police whispering in the hallway and he had heard Steinn's screams from where he was, but he wasn't sure just what had happened.

He drove his curiosity to the side, not wanting to spark anything horrible in the twelve year old's mind. "Some people just do terrible things. And why they do these things, we'll never know." Jack frowned, trying to get to Hendrick's level as best he could. "Just know, Hiccup, it wasn't your fault. What happened wasn't your fault at all and you're gonna be okay."

The brunet's parents had told him those very same words, but he didn't believe them until Jack's watery voice hushed them. He calmly placed his other hand, the hand that wasn't burning, up to the glass. The lump in his throat over took his body; forcing it to shake violently and cause helpless sobs to pour from behind his teeth. Tears streamed down and he allowed himself to curl up against the whole mirror, his head bowed to hide his face.

Val kept him home part of the next week. Camicazi and Fishlegs would come over to see how he was doing and would play video games with him to cheer him up. At times, Camicazi would bring over wrenches and woods and tools, telling her friend that working on something usually cheered him up more than playing and fooling around did. Keeping his mind on something, keeping his fingers working, it almost always brought him to a state of being okay. And after a while of just staring at them, he actually went to work. From the time he woke up till the time he went to sleep he would make small wood statues. Some were simple figures like pencils or lamps while others were more complicated like people or things.

He seemed to have mastered it by the time he went back to school. Whenever the thought of it all came to his head, he pulled out a block of wood and began carving. During recess his first day back, he had sat off to the side near the four squares area and finished a carving. It was a mirror frame, almost identical to the one around Jack's mirror up in the attic. Hendrick smiled as he turned it over a few times, giving it the last finishing touches; hinges, his name in the back, a soft carving of Jack's face and hands against the wooden glass. It was one of his best works yet.

As he blew away some dust, he looked up to see Snotlout standing in front of him, arms crossed firmly across his chest. He stared down at him with the same steady look he gave him on his birthday. "Look, Hendrick," He started before looking away. "I'm sorry about my brother and things."

Hendrick continued to stare at his face, his arms dropping into his lap. "It's fine. He's in jail now he can't hurt anyone anymore."

"Yeah." Snotlout nodded as his lips curled into his mouth. "Yeah, my parents weren't too happy about it all and I know yours weren't either. It's a surprise your dad didn't beat him up."

All he did in response was nod and go back to carving his wooden mirror. For the remainder of recess, Snotlout stood there, awkwardly shifting from foot to foot as Hendrick continued to carve and carve. By the time it was over, the mirror was finished and the older boy ran to go back inside. Fishlegs ran over, breathing heavily as he walked into the school with his friend, complimenting him on his newest creation. He smiled and said his thanks, ignoring the arm that Camicazi put around him when she finally caught up to the two.

Now that they were in the sixth grade, they had even more classes. Weirder classes, harder classes. Classes that made them wish they could just skip to the next grade already. Woodshop was horrible for Fishlegs; dust everywhere and many machines that made him scared of chopping his own finger off. The smallest of them, however, had a blast with all the tools she could use to destroy all the long planks of wood they had. Cooking was a very confusing class and left the three with flat creampuffs and bitter tasting cookies. The only class they all seemed to get a hang of was Health and Life class. They understood all the different levels of grief, the difference between lust and love, and how each body works. Today, as they sat down, large green letters were written on the whiteboard.

"Relationships." Fishlegs read as he sat with his friends at a group table. "I wonder what she means by relationships."

Camicazi shrugged. "Maybe it's about abuse in relationships and how to spot it." Her two friends stared at her with slight surprise. Usually, she wasn't so in depth about lessons; going off almost every lesson about ninjas and robots and pirates and how it related to the topic at hand.

Hendrick shook his head and turned back to listen to the teacher who spoke softly yet firmly, making the room calm as she talked about the many things that were part of a relationship.

Students cringed slightly as she spoke of sexual interactions, most groaned as she spoke of different sexualities, and some frowned as she mentioned abuse in homes. She wrote down a list of signs that could show different forms of abuse; emotional, physical, mental. By the end of class, everyone had at the very least seven back to back pages on abuse in relationships and how to spot them. As the bell rang and some students ran up to talk to them, Camicazi walked out with Fishlegs and Hendrick, reading over the lists with a sad expression. Fishlegs kept the notebook he used for Health and Life in his backpack, hoping that if it was out of sight, it was out of his mind. Hendrick, however, kept his close to his chest and he thought about every fact he learned, trying to connect them to the people he saw in the hallways.

A few people walked around with bruises or uncombed hair. Some had bags under their eyes and the brunet tried to figure out what their lives must be like. What was home life like where they lived? It bothered him that he didn't know. He knew it wasn't his business yet he wanted it to be his business. Nothing felt more horrible than knowing that while he lived happily with a loving family, another child was living somewhere in a basement, being fed scraps of food once a month. He swallowed hard and shook his head. His hand twitched and he felt a prick of burning pain in the middle of his palm. Had Snotlout gone through the same as he had? Maybe it was worse at home than it had been at his birthday party. When they passed him in the hallways to get to the front doors, he noticed him staring back. Their eyes locked for a moment before they all continued on their separate ways.

The walk home was as expected. Hendrick's hand kept burning and burning to the point where he cut open skin from rubbing it on his pants. He hissed and stared at his bleeding palm with hardly any emotion. A groan escaped his throat as he continued walking, slipping his hands into his jacket pockets to keep from getting infected. Leafs fell from trees and slapped against his leg as the wind blew them down the street. As he got closer to home, he kept hearing the same thing over and over; it was getting colder. Colder weather meant holidays and cheerful music, but it also meant that his time with Jack was getting short. It wouldn't be long before he was frozen in place once more, hardly able to give even the slightest of smiles.

His father and mother smiled at him and asked him how his day was the moment he walked through the front door. He quickly gave them an answer, kicked off his shoes and headed upstairs as fast as he could. Opening the attic door and climbing up the small staircase, he tossed his backpack toward the desk, watching it skid till it hit the chair.

"Hey, kiddo. How was school?" Jack asked and smiled when he saw his brunet friend fall backwards onto the bean bag chair. "Long day?"

Hendrick nodded. "Sort of. Just an exhausting day." He stared up at the ceiling and thought about the apology Snotlout had given him earlier.

"Do you want to talk about it?" Exhausting meant many things. For all Jack knew, he could have been playing around too much or he could have been picked on from the time the doors opened till they closed.

He stayed silent as he thought about what he wanted to tell his best friend. He weighed out the options; the look Camicazi had after last period, the talk Snotlout gave him, or the still burning sensation he held in his hand that now slowly traveled toward his chest and down his stomach. Hendrick shook his head and sat up slightly, looking at his backpack.

After a moment or so, he finally looked into Jack's icy eyes. He had to tell him something. Anything. "We learned about sexuality in class today." He said.

Jack smiled and nodded. "Oh? And how did that go?"

"It went okay." The conversation slowly turned from awkward with silent patches here and there to full of facts and opinions. Hendrick spoke of the many sexualities he learned about that day and the many things they go through everyday; abuse, hate, self harm. He frowned as he thought about it all.

As the conversation continued, questions began rolling around inside his head. He started asking Jack if he remembered anyone like that. He asked what they went through and what happened to them if they were caught and everything else he could think of. The other talked softly, clearly taking the situation more seriously than he ever took anything before. Hendrick noticed, as Jack spoke, that his eyes became more and more sad. They became darker and made it seem like the usually upbeat forever teenager was drifting slowly and ever so slightly away from him.

He frowned and stared at him, feeling the sadness pour into him as his friend continued on. When he finally finished with a sigh, Hendrick let the silence hang between them. He allowed it to soak up the bad feelings and he pushed out the last question he had for him, hoping it wouldn't ruin anything.

"Jack?" He started, his voice shaking and small, as if he was afraid of breaking the mirror's glass with just his words. "Are youâ€|?"

Jack bit his lip and stared at him for a moment before nodding, his eyes shifting down to the other's shaking hands. "Yeahâ€|I am." He whispered back. "My motherâ€|I remember her taking a lot of the hate some of the villagers had for me. I remember my sisterâ€|standing up for me in her school."

Hendrick frowned. The only hate he had ever known, what he thought, was created from the jealousy of others. From them not feeling right

about themselves to them not having a good home environment, that's the hate he's always known. For someone to hate people for who they were and who they lovedâ€¦it was stupid in his eyes. Unneeded.

He placed a hand on the mirror's glass, softly smiling up at his best, most trusted friend. The wave of cold air that made him shiver stopped. The burning in his hand stopped. Everything stopped as Jack lifted his head and smiled back.

"I'm going to get you out of here. And then, we'll find you an amazing boyfriend."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: I don't hate Dagur or his character. In fact, I think he's funny. I enjoy watching him in the TV series. I laugh every time he comes on screen and so doesn't my little brother. So no, the reason for his character to be like this was NOT because of hate. It was for character development on Snotlout's part. - ADAM\*\*

\*\*Reviews = Motivation = Chapters\*\*

End  
file.